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ENGLISH SPIRITUAL WRITERS

XXI. CARDINAL MANNING

I

TO MOST Catholics, particularly to the clergy, Manning's fame as a spiritual writer rests on his classic, *The Eternal Priesthood*. Some would say that, apart from this one book, Manning should be regarded as an apologist, a controversialist, a great preacher but not strictly as a spiritual writer. Neither Purcell nor Shane Leslie gives more than a passing reference to this side of his pastoral and priestly activity. Hutton devotes a chapter to the Cardinal as a writer and a preacher and is, on the whole, unsympathetic to this aspect of his work. Only in some parts of Mr Reynolds' *Three Cardinals* and in the essay by Mgr Davis, in the symposium, *Manning: Anglican and Catholic*, is his work as a spiritual writer considered and assessed.

It is true that most of Manning's writings were apologetic. He felt himself called upon to defend the Church and to explain her teaching on a wide range of social and political topics, from parental rights in education to the unity of the Church, from rights of labour to Catholic teaching on civil obedience.

Hutton notes that most of Manning's Catholic sermons were unwritten when delivered, and were only afterwards written out for publication. This gives them, he suggests, a certain thinness and he states that they lose much of their power through dissociation from the presence and calm of the preacher.

The conscious air of authority with which he spoke, his recollectedness, the ease with which an appropriate word or phrase came to his lips, the slight and not ungraceful action, the forefinger being at times slightly raised and then, in emphasis, pointed downwards,—all this being absent when the sermons are

at a later time read, there is nothing to distract attention from the fact that, though the words are well chosen, and many of the phrases happy and well to the purpose, the argument, if flawless, is slight and unconvincing; it is to assertion and not to reasoning that you are expected to bow, and the conviction grows upon you that the preacher has never really touched the "bottom facts" of the case. Nevertheless, taking the standard of pulpit utterances at what it is, every fair critic must admit that Cardinal Manning's sermons were always far above the average, were always interesting and always worth hearing, though one cannot add that they are always worth reading [pp. 222 and 223].

Surveying a number of Manning's writings, including *The Grounds of Faith* (1852), *The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost* (1865), *The Fourfold Sovereignty of God* (1871), and *The Internal Mission of the Holy Ghost* (1875), the author suggests that "these somewhat conventionally able and learned treatises" are to the modern reader more wearying than convincing:

They deserve no doubt respect and praise; many striking passages might be culled from them; there are apt references and quotations, and there are vigorously-drawn conclusions from premisses not equally well established; but a reader cannot for ever sit patiently and be lectured as a catechumen; and it is the prevalence of assertion over every other kind of proposition that must always render these volumes unreadable to the great mass of men. Cardinal Manning was apparently aware of this defect, and in his latest apologetic work, the *Religio Viatoris*, he begins at any rate with an effort to gain his reader's confidence by treating him as if, to some extent, on equal terms. He is almost playful in his repudiation of assumptions; and the thing goes on smoothly for a while; but soon the didactic temper finds its way in; and before the book is half finished, the author is again laying down the law, and is speaking, as he could not fail to speak, considering the force that he believed he had behind him, as one having authority, not to argue but to teach [pp. 223 and 224].

II

It may well be true that Manning's style is wearisome to the modern reader. We may agree that he asserts rather than

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argues. His writings, however, take on an added interest when one begins to appreciate the overriding purpose which inspired so much of what he wrote. We owe it to Mgr Davis to have offered us a synthetic view of Manning's work which gives a unity to so much of what would otherwise seem occasional sermons and addresses. Mgr Davis draws a comparison between Newman and Manning and speaks of them both as being prophets to their age.

Each had a prophetic intuition of some of the grave problems of his time, and each as an apostle of truth offered his solution. The problems they dealt with and therefore the solutions they offered were in different spheres. There were more ways than one in which Victorians were drifting from the truth. Newman thought that the challenge of rationalism, atheism and indifferentism was the most dangerous. Manning was more anxious about the Catholics who were not Catholics; Catholics who no longer knew the Spirit and His work within them, or had forgotten that the Church is God dwelling among men: Catholics who were so ready to appear friendly to their fellow-countrymen that they were in danger of compromising the divine truths of the faith. . . . In the case of Manning fortunately all his spiritual writing is fired by one inspiration, to bring home to clergy and laity a vivid sense of the supernatural reality of the Church and what this involves in her individual members. Failure to realize God's presence in the Church, sacraments and inner spiritual life of the Christian was seen by Manning to be the dominant fault of non-Catholics of his century. Catholics themselves had been only too often affected by this naturalistic outlook of the world around them [pp. 150 and 151].

With this principle of unity as a guide, it is possible to take up Manning's works not only with a new interest but even with some spiritual excitement. In the Preface to *The Glories of the Sacred Heart* (1876), for instance, we find the important principle concerning the doctrinal or dogmatic foundation for devotion and the spiritual life.

I believe firmly that when divine truth is fully and duly apprehended it generates devotion; that one cause of shallowness in the spiritual life is a superficial apprehension of the dogma

of the Incarnation; and that one divine purpose in the institution and diffusion of the devotion of the Sacred Heart, in these last times, is to reawaken in the minds of men the consciousness of their personal relation to a Divine Master [p. ix].

Manning returns to this theme in the third chapter of the book which is entitled "Dogma and Devotion", and he sums up this principle of his teaching in two paragraphs:

The Sacred Heart is the key of the Incarnation; the Incarnation is the treasure-house in which are all the truths of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Incarnation casts off two rays of light; on the one side, the mystery of the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar; on the other, the devotion due to the Blessed Mother of God. Anyone who knows the Sacred Heart aright will know, as I said in the beginning, the whole science of God and the whole science of man, and the relations between God and man and between man and man. These truths are the dogma of dogmas, the treasures hid in the Sacred Heart, the tabernacle of God.

Make yourselves, then, disciples of the Sacred Heart; learn to know it, and that knowledge will never pass away. Faith will pass into vision, but dogma is eternal; dogma is the truth impressed upon the intelligence by faith. The obscurity of faith will pass into the light of vision; but that impression of the truth upon the glorified intelligence will abide for ever when Truth Himself shall be seen face to face [p. 97].

Similarly in the first chapter of *The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost*, supported by a wealth of quotations from the New Testament and the Fathers, he develops one of the earliest modern statements on the Church as the mystical body of Christ, the "incorporation of those who are sanctified" and the union of the Holy Spirit with the mystical body and its members. In this, as in other matters of doctrine and practice, he was in advance of his age. Many of his addresses are remarkable summaries of Christian doctrine, interspersed with practical and pastoral advice of considerable acumen and force. He was concerned to show the richness and majesty of Catholic teaching and to urge his hearers to a more vivid appreciation of their inheritance.

III

It might be argued that Manning's works hitherto mentioned are not strictly spiritual writings. They are sermons, public addresses, statements of teaching intended only indirectly for personal meditation and the spiritual guidance of individuals. There are, however, aspects of Manning's work here and elsewhere which go deeper, and are concerned with personal conduct and personal ideals in the spiritual life. He noted on several occasions how happy he had been during the eight years (1857-65) when he had been superior of the Oblates of St Charles at St Mary's, Bayswater. In dedicating *The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost* to the Fathers of the Congregation, he spoke of them as "you with whom I have spent eight of the happiest years of my life". For the Oblates he had drawn up a rule of life, based on that of St Charles Borromeo, and before leaving them he set out for his successor a rule of life for superiors which may be taken to express both his own ideal and the standard he would expect in this congregation of missionary priests. The rule as Manning left it to Fr Dillon is as follows:

1. Try to be gentle, calm, silent as possible.
2. Never contradict anybody.
3. If you are forced to differ say: "I should hardly have thought so", or "I thought it was so and so", or "Can you be sure that it is so?"
Contradictions seldom convince and almost always irritate.
4. Never reprove anyone in the presence of others.
5. Find all the excuses you can for them, that they may be ashamed of excusing themselves.
6. Never refuse permission unless compelled and then with gentleness, kindness and regret. Let them know that you are going against yourself.
7. Try to cheer and amuse everybody especially if they are ill, or in trouble or out of sorts, that they may turn to you as the refugium and requies peccatorum.
8. Watch over your manner and tones of voice and look.
Be very courteous, considerate and delicate in dealing with others, especially those you are a little impatient with.

9. Pray very much against prejudice and dislike of persons.
10. Look through the largest window in the house, not through the keyhole.
11. In giving obedience don't order but ask. "Be as good as to do so and so." "Would you do so and so," and offer to do it sometimes yourself.

Here are ten commandments for you and one over [p. 55].

It is perhaps too much to expect a clearly defined spiritual doctrine to emerge from Manning's writings. He was, above all, concerned with practical things. Wilfrid Ward thought that, while having nothing of Newman's depth, precision or consistency, he had in a remarkable way the practical man's flair for going to the crux of any problem. In matters of philosophy, Ward thought that he was "sensitive as to generalities, but densely ignorant of all particulars", and that he tended, when faced with a difficult question, to oversimplify the issue, finding some particular phrase or maxim which supplied the one solution to the problem. Ward noted that this key to the problem "might be a maxim of the schoolmen or it might be some idea of his own".¹

There is such a phrase which occurs in Manning's writings, and from which he develops a maxim of the spiritual life—somewhat vaguely expressed but apparently firmly held. Manning calls it the "Law of Liberty". At times he seems to carry it to the dignity of a principle closely akin to St Augustine's *libertas*, a fruit of the gift of Wisdom; while at other times it seems to be no more than a peg on which to hang notions of obligation and perfection in the spiritual life, perhaps little higher than a sense of loyalty and honour—what might be termed Christian or priestly *noblesse oblige*.

Manning first refers to the Law of Liberty in the Lenten sermons published in 1874 under the title *Sin and its Consequences*. He refers vaguely to the Law of Liberty in two of the earlier conferences, speaking of it as "the law of love, of gratitude, and of generous freedom, which is written by the Holy Ghost on the heart of all those who, being born again in Baptism, are united

¹ See the penetrating and sympathetic study of the Cardinal in chapter XIII of Maisie Ward's *The Wilfrid Wards and the Transition*.

to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by the bonds of charity". In dealing with temptation he says:

There is a law of liberty by which we are to be judged at the Last Day. St James says: "So speak ye and do as being to be judged by the law of liberty." Now I am appealing to you in the liberty of Christians, in the generosity and gratitude of those who have been redeemed by the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ. I say, deny yourselves in these trivial but dangerous things.

It is, however, in the sixth conference, dealing with "The Joys of the Resurrection" that he sketches more fully the doctrine of the "Law of Liberty". At this stage it seems to be an effect of the virtue of detachment. We are free to love the creatures of God provided they do not bring us into bondage. In these conferences it is the negative side of liberty which is emphasized. Manning's teaching has some affinity with the Ignatian doctrine on the right use of creatures.

Manning returns to the theme and develops it more fully in *The Internal Mission of the Holy Ghost* in the conference on the "Gift of Counsel". He introduces the law of liberty as follows:

Saint James writes: "So speak ye and so do as being to be judged by the law of liberty." What is this law of liberty? If it be liberty, how are we bound? If it be a law, how are we free? It is precisely the law of counsels. If we love God and our Divine Redeemer; if we hunger and thirst after justice; if we would make sure of eternal life; if we know the will of God, and "This is the will of God, your sanctification"; if we desire to be sanctified, if we desire to be conformed to the likeness of our Divine Lord and His Immaculate Mother,—then the gift of counsel and the prompting of generous love will make us press onward and rise higher in the spiritual life.

He refers to the sermon on the Mount and says it is the law of perfection given to the Christian people of the world.

Our Divine Master calls us to use our liberty as Christians, to rise above the low level of that which is absolutely necessary by the law of commandments, and to ascend up by the law of liberty towards Him, upon the mountain where He, our Light and our Life, dwells eternally [p. 339].

He says Christian perfection is an invitation "revealed to us in the Face of Jesus Christ" to use our liberty in love and generosity to go beyond the minimum set out in the commandments.

Christians are the first-fruits of the Holy Ghost. Look at the heathen nations, out of which we were taken. Compare the Christian people with the nations of the ancient world. I may say, compare the one Holy Catholic Church with the nations which, once of its unity, have now fallen away from it. Tell me where is to be found the Sermon on the Mount; where is to be found voluntary poverty; where is to be found obedience even unto death; where the spirit of martyrs; where the self-denial of confessors; where the meekness of the forgiving, and the mercy of those who die for their brethren? These things are to be found wheresoever the law of liberty and the gift of counsel are the light and the guidance of men [p. 340].

In the following year he developed this theme a little more fully. In the sixth conference in *The Glories of the Sacred Heart*, he speaks of the effect in the temporal order of Incarnation and of its fruit both in individual souls and in Christian civilization.

If any man be in Christ Jesus—and all who are baptized and are born again are in Christ Jesus—"old things are passed away; and all things are become new". Wherever the hearts of men have been thus changed, first one by one, then by households, then by villages and towns and cities and peoples and nations, the world has changed its face. It has put off its own likeness, and has put on the image of Jesus Christ. The outward life and the inward Heart of our Divine Redeemer have become the pattern and law to men. And as the world was changed in individuals, households, and kingdoms, the Church of God became the mother and the queen of the nations. They were thereby redeemed from the bondage and corruption of sin into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. In them have been verified the words of Jesus Christ, "If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed." "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

He notes that Satan tempts men to a false liberty which would rob them of the freedom of the sons of God, and he explains more fully the Christian idea of liberty.

Liberty is not license; liberty is not the freedom of madmen; liberty is not the power to do wrong, nor to believe falsehood, nor to err out of the way of justice. Liberty means redemption from sin, from falsehood, from human teachers who may err and therefore can mislead. It is redemption from all spiritual tyranny of man over man, and the liberation of the whole man, with all his faculties, his intellect, his heart, his will, his affections; it is a redemption of the soul in all its actions towards God, in its obedience, in its faith, in its adoration, by the divine authority of Jesus Christ, who has purchased us with His Precious Blood, and has folded us within a unity where falsehood cannot enter, and under the divine guidance of a Teacher who can never err. Such is true liberty, and there is no other.

Above all, in the fifteenth chapter of *The Eternal Priesthood*, the chapter entitled "The Priest's Liberty", Manning gives more completely his conception of the law of liberty and the type of obligation it engenders.

He speaks of it as a law binding every member of the mystical body of Christ, and above all the chief members of the body, the bishops and priests of the Church.

"This law is anterior to all other laws, bonds, or vows; it is universal, and constrains every regenerate soul. It is supreme, and has no limit in its requirements except the power we have to fulfil it." This liberty of the sons of God is far more than freedom from the restraints of the Mosaic law. It is more than freedom from the guilt of original sin. It supposes the power and desire to fulfil the commandments of God. "There is no duty of a son of God that the regenerate cannot fulfil if they have the will. They have both the power and the freedom. This, then, is the first step in the liberty of the children of God."

In Manning's mind, however, the law of liberty carries the Christian soul to greater heights. It is the law of love, the desire of total giving and all that goes with the gift of self. In a remarkable passage manifestly influenced by St Augustine he sets out the ideals of Christian liberty, the true liberty of the priest.

To serve God is to reign. To love God is perfect liberty. *Ubi spiritus, Domini ibi libertas. Charitas Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris*

per Spiritum Sanctum, qui datus est nobis. Where the Spirit is, there is liberty; for the Spirit of God is love, and where love is, there is liberty. There can be no liberty where love is not. Where the love of God is not, the love of creatures, and of the lowest of all creatures, the love of self, reigns. There can be no greater bondage than this. The love of creatures brings with it jealousies, disappointments, resentments, and manifold temptations. A priest who has lost his liberty by any unbalanced attachment is in bondage. He is dependent for his happiness and for his peace upon something below God, which is changeable, uncertain, and transient. St Augustine describes his own state, before the supreme love of God set him free, as a bondage of iron chains, not forged by the hands of other men, but by his own iron will [pp. 194 and 195].

IV

We begin to see that Manning's law of liberty is less a theological doctrine than the exposition of a sound psychological and educational principle—the principle of personal responsibility and personal response to the Divine generosity. The spiritual life of the Catholic laymen and the Catholic priest depends not on outward conformity but on inward awareness and conviction. There are no limits to generosity and self-sacrifice except the limits of love. The practical consequences are manifold and ultimately depend on the generosity of each individual. Manning's teaching may be no more than an elaboration of the *Ama et fac quod vis* of St Augustine. It is, however, for those not bound by formal rule and observance, a teaching of great importance inspired by acute psychological insight. Ultimately in the spiritual life as elsewhere, each of us establishes personal standards and personal ideals. Examinations of conscience, days of recollection, annual retreats, are occasions to judge how far we come up to those standards and to renew the ideals. Such was Manning's purpose in enunciating the "law of liberty" for layfolk and for priests. It is above all in *The Eternal Priesthood* that this quality in Manning's teaching emerges. The assertions are there as are the quotations from earlier writers. But the style is more sober, the zeal more controlled, the insight into human

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frailties no less keen; while throughout the book are so many sound practical counsels of priestly wisdom.¹

Manning has been criticized for the somewhat narrow and rigorist attitude which he adopted with regard to some aspects of the social duties of an Archbishop and a Cardinal. He exaggerated the division (if indeed there was division) between the religious Orders and what he preferred to call the pastoral clergy. He was perhaps unduly preoccupied with the need for what Gioberti had called *un clero colto e civile*, yet nobody who reads his notes in Purcell's twenty-eighth chapter, especially his notes entitled "Law of Liberty; Expiation" can fail to be moved by his earnest preoccupation with the things of God and the service of his Master.

Under the old Law of commandments the people are bound to pay tithes. Under the new Law of liberty people are free to give as they will, and the measure of their gift is the measure of their will. The will is regenerated in Baptism, and the law of God is written on the heart, and the heart is united by love to the love of God, and the will is conformed by love to the Will of God, *pondus voluntatis amor*; and the will in all its liberty becomes a law to itself. What limit ought a bishop to put upon the use of his liberty in the services of his Divine Master? No limit short of the use that our Lord made of His liberty for us. He gave Himself for us, and we ought to give ourselves to Him. And if a priest is called to this use of His liberty: how much more a bishop as the head and leader of his priests?

Therefore "*summa dicere*" means "*summa semper velle, et summa facere.*"

I should not have written what is in this Journal if I had not been bid to do so. What I have written will perhaps seem to some to be extreme, but it seems to me that someone ought to be extreme, that is, to pursue Truth to the utmost, and to hold up in everything the highest standard. There will always be many, too many, and those good men, who will refine and palliate and enlarge the ways of liberty. Let one then, at least, bear witness for the higher and the best, the happiest and the safest way.

¹ This aspect of Manning's spiritual writing was treated very fully in an anonymous article entitled *Cardinal Manning and The Priesthood* published in THE CLERGY REVIEW in November 1940. It seems unnecessary to go over the ground covered by that article of which use has already been made in these pages.

Perhaps the most fruitful of his spiritual writings are in the journals and notes which he left after his death. As we read them we can well endorse the words of Wilfrid Ward's tribute—a tribute to a priest whose teaching and example did much to bring the fullness of Catholic teaching and ideals of Catholic holiness before the clergy and the people of this country. "Seldom has one felt better suited to a man's life-work and personal appearance alike, the great antiphon, so often sung as he entered his cathedral, and recited by those who prayed over his grave: *Ecce sacerdos magnus, qui in diebus suis placuit Deo, et inventus est justus.*"

✠ GEORGE ANDREW BECK, A.A.
Bishop of Salford

THE THEOLOGY OF PREACHING¹

IF THIS Summer School had taken place some twenty years ago it is unlikely that any time would have been given over to the theology of preaching. Perhaps there would have been a lecture on theology *and* preaching, dealing with the doctrinal content of our sermons, but at that time only a very percipient man would have seen that the theology *of* preaching mattered. The name itself is new. What does it mean? Simply, theological reflexion on preaching itself. Or, in other words, an investigation, at the theological level, of the ministry of the word. For some years now on the Continent, particularly over the last decade, much writing has appeared on this new theme. It has become a commonplace to observe that the present crisis of preaching—everyone seems agreed that there is a crisis—can only be met if theologians take up the question of preaching and discuss it seriously in all its aspects, so that eventually they succeed in creating a treatise on preaching to stand alongside the treatise on the sacraments.

Discussing practical techniques, it is said, is not enough;

¹ A paper read at the Maynooth Union Summer School (22 to 25 June 1960). All the lectures given at the Summer School, including this one, are to be published in a collective volume by Messrs Gill and Son of Dublin.

what is wanted is a genuine theology of preaching. When we enter the pulpit, we are ministers of a mystery, engaged in a saving event that is part of the history of salvation. Only theology, faith seeking understanding, can do justice to an activity that cannot be understood or exercised as if it were an affair of human eloquence. Handbooks on preaching should not be mere manuals of sacred rhetoric but should give a theology of the mystery of preaching. Seminarists have been taught preaching merely by means of practical exercises. No one would dream of dismissing the sacraments in that way. Just as seminarists are taught the doctrine of the sacraments as well as given practical lessons in their administration, so they must be taught about preaching, its meaning and efficacy, and not receive only practical advice on technique. Remarks such as these are evidence of a change of outlook. What has brought it about?

There has been a general change of approach to the pastoral work of the Church. The change of attitude to preaching is part of this. Recent years have seen a renewal in the life and work of the Church; examples of it are the lay apostolate, the liturgical movement and the catechetical revival. As this renewal has gathered force, the conviction has grown that practical techniques are of no use without doctrinal reflexion. The promoters of the lay apostolate found themselves compelled to rethink the doctrine of the Church. The liturgical movement would have come to a halt long ago had it been simply an affair of practical ritual reform. It is moving on irresistibly, because of the profound reflexion it has stimulated on all the truths connected with liturgical worship. In the catechetical revival, the question of methods has given place to the more basic question of the structure and content of the Christian message. Everywhere, the realization has been the same. Practical techniques of themselves will get nowhere. We must re-examine the doctrinal basis of the work of the Church.

What the common conviction comes to is this. Not only the permanent structure of the Church, but also its activity is supernatural. The work of the Church is a mystery of grace, dependent on the other great mysteries of our faith. It is the task of theology to give us an understanding of it. If our active work is

to be fruitful, we must know what we are doing. Otherwise, we may find ourselves on the wrong track altogether; at best, our work will be superficial. Hence, we must go to theology for the insights we need to guide our work, a work that cannot be planned and carried out as if it were purely a human activity.

Is our theology ready for this task? The loud lamentations heard about its defects would seem to indicate not. But the urgent demand for more and better theology, coming from those engaged in active work, is having a healthy influence. Treatises are taking on a new look: forgotten riches are being unearthed. And besides the general repercussions on theology, a move has been started to give it a new dimension. This new dimension is a genuine pastoral theology. We all know what pastoral theology has been up to now. Little more than a discussion of the problems of our ministry at the practical level. Such a discussion is very useful, but it is not theology. The pastoral theology now in process of formation reflects theologically on the mystery of the Church at work. Using all the resources of theology, it examines the Church as a supernatural reality at work in human history, gradually penetrating mankind and growing during this phase of its existence until the Second Coming. It attempts to uncover the basic laws and characteristics of pastoral work. Such a reflexion on the Church precisely as living and working will supplement the more familiar treatises of theology, while being dependent upon them. We are not concerned here with the architectonics of theology, so we cannot treat the place such a genuine pastoral theology will have within theology as a whole. But the theology of preaching certainly comes within its scope. That is then the setting in which we must place it. We may add that, apart from the trend towards a new pastoral theology, other causes which have drawn attention to the particular problem of preaching are the discovery of the importance of the word in the liturgy and recent Protestant writings on the subject.

The conclusion of all this is clear. Preaching is an urgent practical problem. Most observers think that it is in a wretched state at present. The inadequacy of preachers is not the only reason. The modern world has put our hearers in a new situation. In various ways it has caused a disaffection towards

preaching. What is to be done? We must not rush at once to discuss practical remedies. We must first refresh our ideas by recourse to a theology of preaching.

A radical solution to our present difficulties would be to abolish preaching. Man has advanced socially. New social relationships now prevail and fresh techniques of communication have been evolved. Preaching, it could be argued, is no longer a suitable means of conveying truth to others. Why not replace it by discussions or conversational dialogues? Let us have an end to monologues uttered from the height of pulpits by authorized speakers to quietly listening congregations. Nowadays we like to learn in the give-and-take of discussion and debate, even if a particularly qualified person acts as guide. Is then preaching, the proclamation of a message by lawfully commissioned witnesses, an outmoded way of getting across the Christian revelation? The answer—you will have guessed—is No. Preaching is absolutely necessary and completely irreplaceable. There is room for other forms of communication as supplementary aids, but preaching is the essential way in which the Gospel message is made known to men. It is part of the very structure of the Church. It goes back to Christ as instituted by Him. At the outset of our reflexion we are confronted with preaching as a sacred fact, an element in the revealed reality of the Church. Some of the reasons for its place will emerge later. Notice, however, the significance of its institution by Christ. What comes from Christ historically and juridically may be taken as penetrated here and now with the active and present power of Christ.

We can understand preaching only in its relation to revelation and the Church. The Church may be called the Church of the Sacraments and the Word. Now, the two constitutive elements of the Church, the sacraments and the word, correspond to two components in God's revelation. Revelation has two components, though we often think of only one of these. We identify revelation with a list of statements, a body of words, coming to us stamped with the authority of God. There are such statements: there is a revealed body of doctrine. God has made Himself known in the teaching of the prophets and apostles, and, above all, in the teaching of Jesus Christ. But God has revealed Himself, not only in words, but also in deeds.

He has made Himself known by intervening in human history for man's salvation. The deliverance from Egypt, the theophany of Sinai, the conquest of the Promised Land, the liberation from Babylon and, above all, the events of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are essential constituents of God's revelation. Revelation then is twofold. We may distinguish revelation as a reality or as events and revelation as words. Revelation as a reality is the very reality of God's love inserted into human history and present there as a force bringing about man's salvation. It is God's saving act as present in the world and causing the events that make up the history of salvation. This reality of God's saving love became fully and permanently present in Jesus Christ. And so, in what He was and what He did, Christ came as the complete revelation of God to man. This component of revelation is basal. Revelation as utterance or words is dependent upon it. The function of the words is to tell us of the existence of the reality and interpret its meaning to us.

An intimate connexion binds together reality and word in revelation. *Dābār*, which is Hebrew for word, may designate an action or event as well as a word. And so, revelation in its entirety may be called the Word of God. Its two components imply each other. On the one hand, revelation as reality calls for revelation as word. The action of God is addressed to us as persons; it is intended to lead us to a personal encounter with Him. But if God approaches us as persons, He must not simply act for us or upon us. He must tell us what He is doing in intelligible discourse. Language is among the highest endowments of man. God's revelation would not be adapted to the dignity of man as a person and intelligent being, if it did not find expression in language. When we reflect on the role of language in establishing spiritual contact with men at the personal level, we see that the reality of God's self-gift must be offered through the medium of language if it is to bring man as a person into communion with God.

On the other hand, we have already seen that revelation as word depends upon the reality or events which it is its function to express. But more than that. It includes within itself as word the action of God. God's word is never the mere handing on of information. It possesses a dynamic power; it carries an action

capable of effecting what the word expresses. The Hebrew *dābār* and the Greek *logos* are not precise synonyms, although they are both translated as word. The Greek term denotes the meaning of a thing; the *logos* is the expression of its inner nature. What was uppermost in the Greek mind was the intellectual content of words. The Hebrews were more concerned with words as the means of conveying a call, an invitation or command; a word was something addressed to the will, demanding a decision from those who heard it. And if the word was the word of God, it was never ineffectual. If a man accepted it, it saved; if he rejected it, it was a judgement upon him. Now, the revealed word of God is both an effective invitation and a doctrinal message. Neither aspect must be excluded. Though the dynamic aspect is more prominent in Scripture, the idea of a content of truth is not absent. We must bring both aspects into a synthesis. But since we have been inclined to stress onesidedly the intellectual content, it is well to insist here that the word of God, the Christian message, comes as a divine call with a power to save or judge. The response to it can never be an attitude of cool intellectual detachment. It will evoke either the surrender of faith and save or the rejection of unbelief and condemn.

Revelation lives on in the Church. The sacraments make it present as a reality. Symbolic representations of the mystery of Christ, they bring present the reality of that mystery, so that we can take part in it. And the primordial sacrament is the Church itself. The Church is a visible sign containing an invisible reality. Christ set it up as His sign, the extension of His incarnate Life, and He remains one with it, acting unceasingly in the Church through His Spirit. The Church is as it were the fundamental sacrament in which the other sacraments are rooted. They exist in the Church, the body of Christ, as so many actions of the risen Christ. At the centre of the Church is the Eucharist, which contains the totality of the mystery of Christ and His substantial presence. And so, the Church as the Church of the Sacraments is the permanent presence among us here and now of that reality or self-gift of God which is revelation taken in its basic meaning.

Likewise, revelation as word is continued in the Church. The message of God is permanently present in the teaching and

faith of the Church. Since this permanent presence of the totality of God's word is part of the structure of the Church, part of what the Church is, we may call the Church the primordial word, just as we have called her the primordial sacrament. The teaching activity of the Church and the various expressions of her faith have their origin in the Church as word; they come forth from her as from the deposit of living truth. They proceed according to the hierarchical structure of the Church. Although all must take part in the work of the Church, the mission of the Church with the powers this implies was not entrusted equally to all the members of the Church. Christ placed the Church under His apostles and gave them and their successors alone the power of teaching. What is this power?

Fundamentally, all the powers of the Church are one. They form a unity as the power to continue the mission of Christ. At first they were thought of simply as one, and it was some time before any clear distinction was made between them. We must never forget that basal unity. When we distinguish the different powers, we must keep in mind how intimately they are joined together. But what distinctions shall we make? There is a debate here among theologians. Some prefer to distinguish three powers, namely, of order, of jurisdiction and of teaching. Others say there are only two, of order and of jurisdiction. The three-fold division is comparatively recent, and the twofold division may lay claim to a far longer tradition. For a number of reasons I prefer the twofold division, and it is under that presupposition that I intend to discuss the Church's function of teaching.

Does the teaching activity of the Church belong to her power of order or her power of jurisdiction? To both, but in different ways. Through the Church the revealed message is put before men by official and authentic witnesses. Official witnesses are those publicly appointed. "Authentic" indicates that they have been invested with the power necessary for the fulfilment of their office. Since it is a question of revelation, the appointment and investiture must come from God through Christ. We find then in the Church men who are divinely appointed and qualified teachers. They have the right and power to declare the message of God, and thus they stand before men as witnesses to His word and teachers of His doctrine.

These official and authentic witnesses or teachers are the bishops. They are such in virtue of the power of order, which they possess in full. Their power of order includes a charism of teaching which makes them ministers of God's word and ensures the graces required for this.

The bishops alone are teachers in their own right. Others, however, have a subordinate role. This is especially true of priests. They have the power of order as helpers of the bishop. As teachers they extend the range and intensify the effectiveness of episcopal teaching, which otherwise would remain too confined. This does not mean that priests are simply gramophone records of the bishop's voice. No one in the Church is merely a passive recipient. Not even the faith of the laity is a passive impress of episcopal teaching. The Holy Ghost is active in every member of the Church, giving him personal insights into revealed truth. The priest exercises his ministry under the movement of the Spirit. In his power of order he has a divine charism of teaching which brings him special graces. He is helper of the bishop, but as an assistant able to make a personal contribution that is itself due to the action of the Spirit. That is why the bishop may rightly call upon a priest for advice in matters of teaching. All the same, a priest is not an authentic witness in his own right; his role is that of a subordinate co-operator with the bishop.

Preaching, whether episcopal or sacerdotal, is an exercise of the power of order. The character given by Holy Order makes bishops and priests, though in different degrees, ministers of God's word, just as it makes them ministers of the sacraments. They are representatives of Christ and instruments of the Holy Spirit for the proclamation of the Christian message. But the Church does more than preach in an official and authentic way. The hierarchy exists to teach authoritatively. That means that its presentation of revealed truth may take the form of a law binding upon our faith. Questions of faith may be judged authoritatively and the judgements imposed upon us as obligatory. The *magisterium* is entitled to demand by law our response of faith. It does so by the power of jurisdiction. Indeed, the power to make laws that bind our faith is the highest function of jurisdiction. Since the Church does not create the object

of faith but draws it from the sources of revelation, this jurisdictional power in matters of faith is a declaratory power. Basically, what the Church does is to determine the obligation already present in God's revelation. But its determination makes effective an obligation that would otherwise be without force because of lack of clarity.

Jurisdiction in matters of doctrine is exercised in many ways. What I have said so far concerns definitive judgements that impose an act of faith as obligatory. Besides these, there are provisional judgements and administrative decisions. All bishops with jurisdiction over a diocese possess some jurisdiction in doctrinal matters. But in the Church faith is one and universal. When there is an obligation to believe, it must fall on all the members of the Church alike. For that reason, only a universal jurisdiction can issue a law that binds our faith. Hence, such laws must come from the Pope personally or from the episcopal body as a whole in union with the Pope. Severally, bishops are limited to provisional judgements and administrative measures.

It is the function of jurisdiction to control the exercise of the power of order. It governs both the administration of the sacraments and the ministry of preaching. But preaching is more dependent upon it than the sacraments. No one can lay claim to a part in the official and authentic witness of the Church unless he has been authorized by the jurisdictional authority. Rejection by that authority destroys the authenticity of preaching in a way that it does not invalidate the sacraments. Anyone then who teaches in the name of the Church must be duly authorized. He must receive what is known as a canonical mission, either in virtue of his office or by a special act. And so we speak of bishops giving priests the faculty to preach. At the same time, preaching as such is an exercise of the power of order, not an act of jurisdiction.

This point helps us to understand how the laity can receive a canonical mission to teach, although they are incapable of possessing jurisdiction. A canonical mission is not required for the ordinary, unofficial passing on of the faith, which we urge upon all Catholics and which is a particular duty of parents. But diocesan catechists and teachers in schools cannot teach, as they do, in the name of the Church without such a mission from

the bishop. And here also the authorization by the bishop presupposes a divine endowment in the person authorized. It is the character of Confirmation that makes the Christian a witness of Christ and renders him an apt subject to receive from the bishop some part in the official work of bringing the Christian message to men. What I have said about the charism of teaching given with the power of order may be applied, though in a lesser degree, to the character of Confirmation.

Our concern, however, is preaching. So far we have seen that a priest has a sacred power making him a minister of God's word as a helper to the bishop. The necessary condition of its exercise is a canonical mission. Without this, his preaching is no longer a witness recognized by the Church as her own. But it is the power of order that comes into play when the priest, acting as an instrument of the Holy Spirit, makes actual before men the word of God, which is sharper than any two-edged sword (Heb. iv, 12). But can we define more precisely the efficacy of preaching?

All are agreed that the word of God in the Church is living and effective. As present in the Church, it has the dynamic quality proper to God's word and so insistently ascribed to it in the Bible. The word is rendered actual before a particular congregation by preaching. Hence, preaching cannot be a merely human activity. It is a sacred action that goes beyond the level of ordinary human discourse. Priest and faithful are engaged in a sacred event, a mystery; the power of the Spirit is there. The problem is to determine the exact connexion between the action of the preacher and the action of the Spirit. How far is preaching a cause of grace? Here there is no agreement. It is the key question in the modern theology of preaching, and authors are still fumbling.

Understandably enough, the biblical insistence on the power of God's word has made writers want to attribute to preaching an efficacy similar to that of the sacraments. Some, however, have stood firm against this. For them, preaching is an occasion not a cause of grace. The Holy Spirit acts on the listeners at the time of preaching, but the grace given is not caused by the preaching. Those who are dissatisfied with this must be careful. Preaching is not an eighth sacrament, first

because there are only seven, and secondly because the part of the human minister is obviously greater than it is with the sacraments. A deceptive compromise has been to call preaching a sacramental. More subtly, it has been suggested that preaching causes actual graces, while the sacraments cause sanctifying grace. Needless to say, there have been different variations on these themes. The nub of the difficulty lies in the relationship between preaching and the sacraments. We can, then, tackle the matter best from that angle.

The sacraments are inconceivable without preaching. The Gospel must first be preached, because people are brought to the sacraments through preaching. And they are not merely told about the sacraments. Preaching arouses in them the required dispositions. It is essential to the liturgy as a mystagogy, a leading of the people into the mysteries celebrated in the sacraments. In return, the sacraments give point to preaching by bringing about what the preacher has proclaimed, by making present the saving events he has announced. But the union between word and sacrament is even closer. Words constitute the form of the sacraments. And these words are not magical formulae but expressions of the faith of the Church. They are intelligible utterance in continuity with preaching. So, in the sacraments, words have a sacramental efficacy, and the sacraments may be rightly seen as the highest exercise of the Church's ministry of the word. These intimate bonds between word and sacrament mean that the liturgical assembly is the privileged setting for preaching. To use a Biblical term, the assembly is the *kairos* for preaching, the opportune time when the word is preached in circumstances that allow its maximum efficacy. But when the word is not the form of a sacrament, in what way is it efficacious?

Preaching, I maintain, is a direct cause of grace. It is a sign which mediates grace to the hearers. The action of preaching does not simply put before the congregation the external expression of the Christian message; it does this, but, in doing so, it is a sign that causes grace. Now, if we maintain this, we must face squarely the question of the difference between preaching and the sacraments.

Putting the matter briefly, we can say that preaching is

correlative to faith, the sacraments to sanctification. Preaching is a ministry which serves faith. The grace that it gives is the grace of faith. But the sacraments presuppose faith. Even baptism demands faith in an adult for a fruitful reception. The giving of faith, then, is something that precedes the sacraments and leads to the sacraments. So, the mediation of preaching goes before the sacraments and leads men to the sacraments. This fits in with preaching as a mystagogy.

We must examine more carefully the way faith is given. We cannot believe unless the object of faith is put before us. By the object of faith are meant the various truths that we have to believe. We must also become aware of the motive of faith, which is the reason moving us to faith and grounding our assent. The motive is God Himself as First Truth, and this motive must be offered to the mind. Now, all would agree that preaching brings us the object and motive of faith. As St Paul says: "Every one who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved. Only, how are they to call upon him until they have learned to believe in him? And how are they to believe in him, until they listen to him? And how can they listen, without a preacher to listen to?" (Rom. x, 13-14). But faith requires more than the outward presentation of its object and motive. If we are to respond to this presentation by an act of faith, we must be given an interior testimony by grace. The object and motive of faith are attainable by us according to their supernatural significance, only if our mind is enlightened and our will drawn by grace. In other words, both an outward presentation and an interior testimony are necessary, in order that we should be offered the Christian message in a way sufficient for faith.

Now, what I maintain is simply this. Preaching offers men the Christian message, not merely outwardly, but gives also at the same time the interior testimony, the grace needed for faith. Both elements are required for an adequate presentation of the word of God. The two are intimately connected and always found together in fact. Further, the preacher is joined to Christ and made an instrument of the Holy Spirit by the power of order. It seems reasonable to hold that the action of the divinely appointed minister of the word when he proclaims the Christian message causes the grace without which his hearers are

unable to grasp by faith the saving significance of what he is saying. Moreover, only if we hold this do we do justice to the Biblical teaching that the preaching of the apostles was the very word of God, and not merely words about God. To quote again St Paul: "And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers" (I Thess. ii, 13—RSV). The word the apostles preached, the word we preach is the effectual, saving word of God. Preaching does not stop short at words about God. As His ministers, we convey the word of God, understood as the action by which God turns towards men and addresses them, calls them and invites them to faith. We do not preach a dead word, which is then vivified without our ministry. We mediate the word in its fullness, the living word, which means the word illuminated by the action of the Spirit. With the external word, we offer the light of faith. Notice that the need for grace does not apply only to the unbeliever hearing the word for the first time. The believer needs grace in order to exercise his faith. Although he has the virtue of faith, he still needs the actual grace of God for his activity of believing.

But it may be felt that I have narrowed excessively the scope of preaching. The preacher addresses the faith of his hearers, but he does more than that. In the course of his ministry, he urges them to the practice of all the Christian virtues. Does preaching give the grace for the exercise of the virtues other than faith, at least in so far as internal acts are concerned? There are no sufficient grounds for asserting this. But some distinctions must be made. First, when preaching encounters a living faith, the response of faith it evokes is commanded by charity. It is by an act of charity that the will moves the intellect to assent. The grace for this particular movement of charity is mediated by preaching. The reasons already given apply. As a ministry of faith, preaching is directed to a living faith as well as to an imperfect, dead faith. Secondly, no Christian virtue is possible without faith, because only by faith can we perceive the objects and motives of the virtues according to their supernatural value. And so, the preacher promotes the exercise of all

the virtues in two ways. He exhorts his hearers by his words, and the efficacy of his preaching causes the interior testimony, or grace, needed for them to appreciate supernaturally the Christian ideal he is putting before them. Thirdly, since a person who opens his heart to one grace receives further graces, one who listens to a sermon with faith is offered graces to set in motion the other virtues. Preaching starts the process by presenting the objects and motives of the virtues under the light of faith. Hence, it may be considered rightly as an occasion on which God grants an abundance of actual graces. However, it seems excessive to regard the action of preaching as the cause of these graces, apart from those immediately connected with faith. Such an efficacy is not required in order to give to preaching its full value as the mediation of the living word of revelation. It is better understood as the ministry which serves faith.

We have, then, a clear difference between preaching and the sacraments. Preaching is a sign causing the grace necessary for faith. It does not directly give sanctifying grace or its increase, although it may lead to actions that draw down such grace *ex opere operantis*. The sacraments are correlative to sanctification and directly cause sanctifying grace *ex opere operato* in those who receive them worthily. Therefore, preaching prepares for the sacraments and is completed by them.

A further and very important difference between preaching and the sacraments lies in the extent to which preaching depends on the minister. His personal unfitness can destroy the efficacy of his preaching. Why this contrast? The preacher has to compose the sermon and thereby construct the sign that causes grace. All that is necessary for a valid sacrament is exactly determined. No matter how careless and unworthy the priest, if he administers the sacrament correctly, it comes into existence with all its power of causing grace. With preaching, it is left to the preacher to form the word of God. It depends on him how far a sermon is the genuine word of God. His activity determines whether the word of God is presented in its full richness or in an impoverished form. It is not unknown for a preacher to spend his time putting forward his own ideas, and sometimes only faint vestiges of the word of God can be discerned in a sermon. The interior grace given by preaching

bears upon what is outwardly presented, and only on that. A defect in the outward presentation mars the efficacy of the sermon for grace. Preaching on the Mystical Body will give grace to believe in the Mystical Body, but people will only receive such grace if the priest does in fact preach on the Mystical Body. And likewise with the rest of the Christian message. The grace of faith is not an immediate revelation; it is a light illuminating what is externally expressed. The efficacy of preaching is dependent on the faithfulness and insight with which the preacher conveys the word of God. When a priest does faithfully preach the message of Christ, and in the degree to which he does, the essential power of his words comes not from human eloquence but from the Holy Spirit. Preaching is a divinely established cause of grace. But the sign that causes grace depends for its very existence on the priest, and it is a sign that can exist more or less fully according to how well the priest carries out his function.

So, the assertion that preaching is a direct cause of grace does not alter the fact that the learning and holiness of the priest are required for its efficacy. It simply makes more precise the reason why they are required. The essential efficacy of preaching is not given by the learning of the preacher or the merits of his prayers; it belongs objectively to preaching in virtue of its institution by Christ and the action of the Holy Spirit. But the sign which conveys the divine action is brought into existence by the priest. His learning and holiness do not directly measure the power of God's word, but they determine the extent to which the word of God emerges into existence here and now. Learning is necessary. Unless the priest knows the Christian message, he cannot preach it. Holiness does not abolish the need for sacred learning. For example, if a priest is unaware of the new insights gained through the liturgical movement, he will be unable to enrich the faith of his people with those insights. But holiness is supremely necessary. A profound insight into the revealed word of God comes, not from human erudition, but from faith and charity. A holy priest, whose lack of learning is not due to any neglect, will often have a truer understanding of revelation than a learned but worldly theologian. And if we ask which virtues are particularly relevant to a

preacher, we shall not be far wrong in saying faithfulness to Christ as His minister and a humble self-effacement before God's truth. There can be no more damning verdict against a preacher than to say he preaches himself.

There is an added reason why holiness is necessary in the preacher. The presentation of the Christian message is adequate only if it is accompanied by signs of the life of grace in the witnesses. We preach a message of salvation, not abstract theories. By our preaching, God is offering to men holiness: a union with Him as He is in Himself, which comes as a deliverance to sinful man. The offer is only half-made, unless it finds expression in the lives of the witnesses as well as in their words. To put the point technically, the concrete manifestation of divine life in the witnesses is a sign of credibility that must accompany the normal presentation of the Gospel message. It is true that a lack of such a manifestation in the individual preacher can be supplied for his hearers by its presence elsewhere in the Church. But this remains an anomaly. Preaching is the full witness that it should be, only when the preacher is urging upon others a salvation which has come to himself and is fruitful in his own life. Only then is he adequately serving the faith of his hearers. At the same time, we must recognize that the ministry of the individual preacher is not isolated, but is supported under all its aspects by the Church. While, however, this is a consolation for the zealous, it is no excuse for the negligent.

After this lengthy analysis of the efficacy of preaching, we may glance again at some of the explanations recently proposed. To say that preaching is an occasion of grace is partly true, but it is not enough to save preaching as the mediation of the living word of God. The idea that preaching is the cause of actual graces is both too wide and too narrow. It is too wide if it means that preaching gives actual graces of all kinds. Preaching is directly addressed to faith. It is too narrow if one agrees, as I do, with those theologians who hold that the infused virtue of faith is given in the first act of faith, even before justification; for there is no reason to deny to preaching the power to bestow the virtue. I called the designation of preaching as a sacramental a deceptive compromise. It is easy to seize upon the term to express that preaching is not a sacrament but like

a sacrament. However, sacramentals are instituted by the Church: preaching by Christ. Sacramentals can be changed or abolished by the Church: preaching remains essentially unchanged as part of her structure. Sacramentals derive their efficacy from the prayer of the Church: the efficacy of preaching is due to the objective power in the word when mediated by a divinely appointed minister. Since the merits neither of the minister nor of the recipient give preaching its divine power, we are justified in speaking of an *ex opere operato* efficacy. But the phrase is misleading. Because it is normally used of the sacraments, it gives the impression that the effect of preaching depends as little on the preacher as the effect of the sacrament on the minister. We have seen that this is not so. In brief, we can perhaps do no better than say that preaching is a direct cause of faith, through the action of the Holy Spirit, when it is the presentation of the word of God by a divinely appointed minister of Christ.

What has been said so far can be summed up by saying that preaching has Christ as its principle in three ways. He is its principle historically, since our preaching was established by Him. He is its principle juridically, because preachers are His authorized spokesmen with a mission derived from Him. He is its active principle, because its power is due to the present action of the risen Christ, who gives the Spirit. We must now add that Christ is the content of our preaching. Our task is to preach the mystery of Christ in its fullness. How are we to do this? Christian preaching has assumed many forms as the one message has been adapted for different times, places and situations. The need for adaptation has always been felt, and rightly so. But recent work has made clearer than before the existence of laws governing Christian preaching, which must be followed if we are to be true to the structure of preaching as instituted by Christ. These laws, which are inherent in the word of God as given to men, must be respected, whatever the situation of our hearers.

Preaching is of two principal kinds: evangelization and catechesis. The first is concerned with conversion. Its purpose is to convert the hearers, whether by a first conversion, involving the genesis of faith, or by a second or later conversion, requiring the renewal of faith. It is the missionary proclamation

of the *kerygma* or message, the good news of Christ, first directed to the unbeliever and then repeated when a spiritual renewal is called for, particularly at the time of missions. Catechesis, the second kind, is concerned with communion, the strengthening of union with Christ. It consists in a deeper and more detailed presentation of the Gospel message, with the purpose of nourishing the Christian life of believers. They are led ever closer to Christ as the different facets of the Christian mystery are displayed before them.

Evangelization has certain basic characteristics. We can describe it as the proclamation of the salvation brought about by God in Christ and offered to all men who repent and believe. We speak of it as a proclamation, because the announcement of the good news must resound; it must be public, solemn and forceful. Since our message is a demand for faith, our preaching should be striking and bring into relief the telling power of the mystery, rather than superficially clear in a way that shows an over-concern to measure the message in terms of human reason. This form of preaching presents the Christian message in a global fashion. It is important that this global presentation should respect the structure of the message. If this is done, the preacher will not offer men a list of truths and precepts, but tell them a history and announce to them an event. His task is to recount the mighty deeds of God, His actions for men, and unfold the history of salvation, in which God has revealed Himself as Lord and Saviour. But salvation was achieved in Christ. The preacher must proclaim Jesus Christ and His work as the definitive intervention of God, the saving event *par excellence*. Evangelization announces the good news, the salvation, the new order, brought about by the death and resurrection of Christ. At the centre of the *kerygma* is Christ in His paschal mystery. But the announcement is not made to add to our stock of information. It comes as an offer of salvation to those who repent and believe. And so the message must be delivered as a summons to conversion; it is addressed to men as a call imperatively demanding a decision. We tell sinners joyfully of their salvation and urge them to put away their sins and be converted.

Such is the preaching that corresponds to conversion and the genesis of faith. Since the need for conversion is always

with us, our Christian people must hear such preaching from time to time. It is the kind of preaching that should predominate at a mission, because missions are intended to renew the basic conversion of men to the Christian faith. We owe the analysis of its character and content to recent Biblical studies of the apostolic preaching.

Faith once engendered needs nourishing. This is done by introducing believers to the full content of the Christian message in its various elements and initiating them into the sacraments. To do this is the work of catechesis. This also has certain basic characteristics. Although the preacher deals with the details of the Christian message, dwelling now on one point now on another, the harmonious structure of that message must not be disturbed. Stress on individual doctrines should not be allowed to upset the balance of the whole. The preacher fails in his duty if he pays too much attention to peripheral points, neglecting what is central, or expatiates unduly on his favourite devotions. Even the necessity of explaining a newly defined doctrine or combating an error should not lead to a disregard of the proportions that determine the relationship among the truths of revelation. The history of Christian instruction would have been happier if this had always been observed. Hence, catechesis must be Christocentric, with the paschal mystery at its heart. Further, all catechesis is inseparably dogmatic, moral and liturgical, even though one or other aspect may be dominant in a sermon. A Christian dogma is never mere theory but a saving mystery that demands a moral response and is encountered in its reality in the sacraments. Christian morality is not merely ethical behaviour but a peculiarly Christian way of life, based on the truths of faith and finding its expression and source in the liturgy. The liturgy is not a set of traditional ceremonies to be explained to the curious but the mystery of Christ made present sacramentally as the object of our faith and the source of our Christian life. To isolate one or other of the three constituents of catechesis, which is a danger threatening especially our moral preaching, is to distort its meaning and weaken its appeal. A more detailed account of the themes of Christian preaching may be found in the writings connected with the catechetical revival.

Our initial conversion underlies all our Christian life. We never leave it behind, and our communion with Christ but deepens it. All catechesis includes, at least implicitly, a call to conversion. It springs from the *kerygma* or proclamation of the good news and is simply its organic development, the display of its full implications. This kerygmatic bearing of catechesis is particularly important in the instruction of Catholic children, who must be led to make their adherence to the faith a truly personal decision. The conversion of the unbeliever must find its counterpart at some point in the lives of Catholics. The failure to evoke such a conversion explains the ease with which so many Catholics lapse.

Both evangelization and catechesis must respect the objective structure of the Christian message. What enables us to achieve this is the existence of the Bible as the perennial centre around which the teaching of the Church always revolves. The Bible has given the mystery of salvation a primordial verbal expression, which is the exemplar and norm of our preaching. The value of its contents as a source lies not only in their fecundity but also in their divinely guaranteed balance and proportions.

If Christian preaching has permanent features, it carries with it an urgent necessity of adaptation. It is not enough to offer the Christian message in Biblical terms. The task of a living voice is to preach divine truth to each generation in a way that it can understand. Preaching seeks to arouse a personal act of faith. Its fruitfulness presupposes an intelligent grasp of what is said. We do not preach to infants or unconscious adults. And a man cannot believe what has no meaning for him. We must make contact with the minds of our hearers. We must enter into their mentality and try to discover the thoughts and desires to which we can link the Christian message. That does not mean that we can leave aside entirely the Biblical and traditional categories. There are certain ideas and themes that must be conveyed to every generation. We cannot change them, any more than we can change the basic symbolism of the sacraments. If they are no longer meaningful to our people, we must make them meaningful. Examples of these are salvation, glory, grace, the kingdom of God, the exodus, witness, mystery, life, resurrection and spirit. These

cannot be replaced, but we must get them across. We must explain them in a way that means something to people today. An immense effort of adaptation is required. It demands a deep understanding of the Christian message itself and an insight into the minds of modern people. Only through such an effort will our preaching be a real preaching and not a fruitless sign.

Not much has been said in recent writing on the theology of preaching about the attitude required in the hearers. Place, however, should be found for an analysis of what is appropriate in those who listen to the word of God. Since preaching is addressed to faith, the qualities required for faith may give us our clue. First, an openness to God's grace. The attitude with which people listen to a sermon should not be that with which they listen to an ordinary talk on the radio. It should be similar to the one which they approach the sacraments. Preaching offers them the grace of God, and their hearts must be ready to receive this. Secondly, such openness implies generosity. Faith is a surrender of ourselves to God; there should be no reservations, but a willingness to follow the suggestions of the Spirit, whatever the cost. Thirdly, faith is an obedience. It is an assent made in darkness as a homage to God. We sacrifice our intellectual independence and ease to rely exclusively on the native light of our own mind. The obedient character of faith is intensified by the fact that the word of God comes to us through men. Obedience to the Church secures what is basic to faith, namely, the surrender of the autonomy of our reason, and thus offsets the danger of a reliance on our own unaided intellect, which is ultimately destructive of faith. Basically, the attitude of those who hear the word should be humble obedience, with a recognition of the priest as a divinely appointed witness. But we should want our faithful to be mature Christians, and Christian maturity includes an ability to discern clearly the human element in the Church. Preaching is often defective, if rarely frankly erroneous, and any failure of our hearers to perceive its defects is due to ignorance not faith. Humble obedience is not the same as blind submissiveness. But, just as in our general attitude to the Church, recognition of its divine character is primary and a critical awareness of its human defects but secondary, so also in the attitude of our hearers,

humble obedience to the word should be primary and a critical appraisal of the inadequacy of the preacher but secondary. As for ourselves, far from exploiting such an attitude by aggressive self-assertion, we should be able to say to our hearers what St Paul said to his: "After all, it is not ourselves we proclaim; we proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake" (II Cor. iv, 5).

We are living within the history of salvation. The present stage of that history is the age of the Church on earth. Now, preaching is the characteristic of this period, which will last till the Second Coming of Christ. The reason why the Second Coming is delayed is the preaching of the Gospel, for it is held back until the Gospel has been preached to men. Preaching is a sacred task. We are very conscious of our role as ministers of Christ's sacraments, but are we sufficiently aware of our role as ministers of God's word? Yet, we are given the ministry of the word by the power of order, and it is, as we have seen, a mediation of grace. Recent studies of the sacrament of Holy Order have shown how the Christian priesthood is essentially related to the ministry of the word as well as to the Eucharist, a point comparatively neglected since the Reformation. The sacraments and the word are the two components in the structure of the Church. They are and must be the two concerns of our ministry as priests.

CHARLES DAVIS

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C. D.

LAY SPIRITUALITY

CLERICAL and lay spirituality are, of course, shoots from the one stem of Christian holiness, but each has its own characteristics true to the particular circumstances in which it has to exist. What is particularly interesting about the emergence of a specific lay spirituality in our times is that its clearer definition has helped to throw valuable light on the precise spirituality of the diocesan clergy. This is worth mentioning because growth in the spiritual life has often been impeded in the past for both clergy and laity through a lack of specialization and an aping of one by the other. In the life of the Church, clergy and laity complement one another: so too their distinctive spiritualities.

If one is inclined to doubt the need of a distinctive spirituality for layfolk, it is usually because one has not sufficiently grasped the key position the laity hold in the Church today. At a moment of crisis both for the Church and the world, the layman has become the indispensable missionary who establishes continuous contact between the world and the Church, the temporal and the eternal, the creative and the redemptive work of God. The new type of layman coming into prominence in the Church today is the solution to a dilemma which has dogged the mission of the Church for the past eight centuries.

From the twelfth century the Church has been unable to effect a true synthesis of the eternal and the temporal, the contemplative and the practical. We are well aware today of the situation where a new technological world has come into existence without the Church, but it is good to remember that the process started well back in the twelfth century with a rebellion of the priesthoods of second causes against that of the First Cause. Mediaeval Christendom was undeniably an imposing attempt to actualize a sort of kingdom of God on earth. It came near a maximum domination of the temporal by the spiritual, of nature by grace.¹ Though this alienation was never complete, it sparked off the rebellion of modern laicism and the modern

¹ Cf. Yves Congar, O.P., *Lay People in the Church*, London (1957), ch. 1.

movement to recapture from the Church rights in second causes or in earthly things.

An interesting though unfortunate consequence for the Church was that, in face of this rebellion, the mystery of Christian faith tended to become sacrificed in the interests of ecclesiastical power. Charles Péguy in *Clio I* put his finger on the crux of the matter when he criticized the French clergy for compromising with the *mystique* (which alone makes Christianity valid) and devoting their energies to propagating a *politique*. "It is one and the same movement," he wrote, "which makes people no longer believe in the Republic and no longer believe in God . . . one and the same sterility withers the city and Christendom." The case of English Catholicism is slightly different, but a like judgement is made by Mgr Philip Hughes when attributing the ineffectiveness of the Church's mission to nineteenth-century society to an over-concern for its own interests and a lack of concern for the underlying social ills of the time.¹

What is so singular about the modern lay movement in the Church is the rediscovery in the new lay spirituality of the element of mystery in normal Christian life. This is one of its main characteristics. To judge its full significance, one needs to examine the credentials of an antecedent spirituality shared often by clergy and laity alike.

It has been said that converting worthy people is at times more difficult than saving the infidel. The infidel retains a sense of the mystery in life and a subservience to the unseen and invisible, but the average Christian often parts company with genuine religion and the mystery of the faith by transferring the centre of Christianity from God to himself. The contemporary novelist, Mr Graham Greene, has made various attempts to suggest the particular kind of atheism innate in the pseudo-Christianity practised by a certain number of its adherents. In *The Quiet American* he seems to get to the root of the matter in a conversation which takes place between the theist Pyle and the agnostic Fowler in a Vietnamese watchtower during wartime:

Things to me wouldn't make sense without Him.
They don't make sense to me with Him.

¹ *English Catholics, 1850-1950*, ch. 1.

Pyle is typical of the kind of believer who makes God a convenience or utility in his life: he does not accept God on God's terms but on his own. What matters most to Pyle is Pyle's conscience which must be safeguarded at any expense, God's or man's. Fowler instinctively reacts against Pyle's impertinence: he professes no belief in God but has the natural good manners to pay God the compliment of existing on a plane higher than that of the human being, which once accepted makes the complete rationalization of human affairs impossible. This sensitiveness of Fowler stands him in good stead at an earlier incident where Pyle refuses to touch the ritual lunch in the Caodist temple for hygienic reasons and cannot understand why his Vit-Health sandwich is refused by the Caodist commandant for religious.

The new type of layman now being formed in the Church for the needs of our age is a much more mature Christian. His adult Christianity is not something stereotyped and mass-produced but of free and conscious choice. He is not content with merely carrying out certain regulations—keeping on the right side of the law—implicit in his juridical membership of the Church. On the contrary he feels that as a consecrated layman, he is part of the constitution of the Social Body of Christ and has a constituent part to play in her organic role in contemporary society. For him the Church is a divine mystery carrying out a mysterious action in the world, and more than an organization or an ideology.

The modern apostolic layman does not regard his apostolate as something added on to his Christianity but as a logical consequence of his membership of the Church. Through Baptism and the life of the sacraments he believes that he now lives on the divine level of existence and is able to enter God's plan for mankind and play a part in its fulfilment. Christianity for him is the interaction of two loves and two freedoms, an alliance of two persons, God and himself. He reacts to the fact that God proves His respect for the creature He has made to His own image in inviting the human person to act on his level by accepting the invitation on God's terms, not on his own. He is in fact irreplaceable in God's scheme of things and his contribution is something quite unique.

What has brought him to this awareness is his sense of the value of the temporal. The former spirituality of the laity tended to flow from a withdrawal from the world: the spirituality of the modern layman flowers in meeting the challenge presented to Christianity by the modern world. Instead of regarding his time on earth as a filling in of time before he reaches heaven, he recognizes that he is providentially put on the earth at a certain time and in a certain place to fill time with God and eternity. His Christianity is essentially worldly in the sense used by Cardinal Newman (for which he was strongly criticized at the time). He is conscious of the fact that "the seventh day of creation marks both the day of rest from the creative work of God and the divine call to man to perfect it", and "that creatures are the path along which man discovers and reaches divine power, high wisdom and primeval love".

It is important to see that his attitude to the temporal characterizes the spirituality of the layman today. One cannot speak of the complementariness of the clergy and the laity in the Church, necessary for her mission to become effective, if a distinction is not made between their respective rights and responsibilities. The layman in the Church is responsible for bringing the temporal order to the Church. His spirituality, therefore, must be rooted in the temporal just as he himself in his everyday affairs is rooted in it. If it is not so rooted, then his spirituality will fail to interpret or bring a divine meaning to the situation in which he has been placed by Providence: the contribution he makes to the making of God's kingdom on earth will not be his own. The mission of the Church will be hampered by the presence within her of clericalized laymen and laicized clergy.

One of the very interesting points about this "worldly" Christianity is that it re-establishes contact with the original doctrine about the meaning of human work or co-partnership with the Divine Worker. Insofar as the modern layman recognizes a divine significance in whatever he does to perfect creation, he immediately escapes from the unchristian and inhuman formula of work for work's sake which is the underlying inspiration of the modern world, and begins to understand the import of God's message to him: "Have leisure and know that I am God."

The importance of a re-discovery of the spirit of leisure cannot be over-emphasized in our day. It is the under-pinning of the whole Christian way of life, especially when the contemporary mode of work, scientific production, is forcing moralists to review at depth Christian teaching on the Third Commandment and the nature of servile work. Josef Pieper, the German Thomist, has shown that in the emerging world of total work where the human person becomes less of a person and more of a cog the higher he rises in the hierarchy of production, leisure has wrongly taken a position subservient to work. On the contrary, as Aristotle maintained, man works only to have leisure. Leisure is not the inevitable result of external factors, of spare time, a holiday, a week-end off or a vacation. It is, in the first place, an attitude of mind, a condition of the soul, a capacity for steeping oneself in the whole of creation.

The point and the justification of leisure [writes Professor Pieper] are not that the functionary should function faultlessly and without a breakdown but that the functionary should continue to be a man—and that means that he should not be wholly absorbed in the clear-cut milieu of his strictly limited function; the point is also that he should continue to be capable of seeing life as a whole and the world as a whole, that he should fulfil himself and come to the full possession of his faculties, face to face with being as a whole.¹

A full spiritual life is denied many today because often human activities are spuriously Christianized by throwing a cloak over perverted natural activities. Many of these perversities entered Christianity at the time of Enlightened Liberalism when the Church through an inability to adapt her divine principle of life to a changing human condition unwittingly through her members adopted the attitudes of the day. One need only mention how, generally speaking, in the mentality of many Christians the organization of the Church has come to mean more for them than her organic life: how the essence of virtue is considered to consist in the difficult rather than the good: how the commercial, competitive "self" virtues deputize

¹ *Leisure the Basis of Culture*, London (1952), p. 57.

for the gifts of the Holy Spirit: how the administration of a parish sometimes is looked upon as more important than the priestly office of mediation. All these are symptoms of a lack of the desiderated contemplative habit, vital for the Christian *mystique*, which can only be put right with a re-discovery of the spirit of leisure.

The spirituality of the modern layman puts him on top of the world, as a human being *capax universi*, and enables his natural soul to breathe whereas before it was stifled with a religion reduced to a system. But as he mounts higher, his new vision obliterates only human deformations, not the distinctive features of human variety and differentiation. A second characteristic of his adult Christianity is its social consciousness, its universal friendship, its catholicity.

In his spirituality is a reflexion of the anxieties, troubles and hopes of the Church and the world. He has developed one of the chief elements in Christian adulthood, a universal solicitude or concern. His thoughts, aims and ambitions have become as wide-embracing as those of the First Apostle. His action as a member of the Church becomes determined in its scope and pattern by hers. His is a missionary spirituality.

But because he is a man of his age he will use a science of faith to probe and discover the precise human needs and problems which call for a Christian solution. He is not content with a mere organizational or ideological catholicity: for him it must be organic. He knows that the refusal to accept Christianity by so many of his contemporaries is due to the feeling that it does not accept the whole of human nature. People are afraid of being press-ganged into the Church. Authentic sanctity is seldom presented as bound up with an authentic human life, with the uniqueness, the limited talents and potentialities of the human individual.¹ The belief that the essence of the Church's mission is to form man in his wholeness has too few witnesses and, owing to an over-emphasis on the structure of the Church, her development through the rich variety of her members' contributions is left out of the picture presented of her.

The layman is conscious of the vitality and fertility of the

¹ Cf. J. Goldbrunner, *Holiness is Wholeness*, London (1955).

Church and sees her catholicity not merely in terms of quantitative expansion but as a quality of her being and the capacity of her principle of unity to assimilate, raise up and restore into the already existing transcendent unity of God every human person and every human value and expression.¹

This sense of qualitative catholicity is at the missionary layman's hand as, in the front ranks of the Church, he strives to make the Church the vital animating principle of unity in contemporary society. He reaches such spiritual maturity through his concern for the temporal. He sees a new world coming into existence without the guidance and help of the Church. Since he is both a member of the Church and a citizen of the world, he recognizes that he has double vocation as a member of each. God is calling him to holiness through profane activities. His task is to restore a divine meaning to human effort, to make human progress intelligible, to effect a synthesis between the divine and human, the supernatural and the natural, the eternal and the temporal.

It is not unknown for a priest engaged in the pastoral apostolate to feel that his multifarious activities in the service of the community hamper his individual sanctity. Only a constant reminder that his service of the community is the main source of his sanctification helps him to resolve his dilemma. The same problem faces the modern layman in the Church. The urge is to keep in water-tight compartments his commitment in the world and his individual spiritual life. The layman, too, finds the solution to his difficulties in the reminder that his spirituality is fettered to his membership of the Christian community. This love of the community is the third characteristic of his spirituality.

The effects of modern industrialism and urbanization on human family, personal and social life have yet to be fully gauged but we know enough about them to recognize that in their train follow social disintegration and the atomization of the family. As Christians we still talk rather glibly about the family being the bedrock of civilized living and the main educational influence in society, unaware at times that, with any great change in the social organism, the family and the community

¹ Cf. Yves Congar, *Divided Christendom*, London (1939), ch. 2.

need to both adapt and enrich themselves to face up to the new, greater demands made upon them.

In our own times we notice that many institutions arising from the natural law no longer completely fulfil their task. Contemporary social life continuously grows more complex with an ever-growing variety of human relationships: members of the one family working in different places and at different jobs, continuously widening their interests and seeking new fields for their abilities, sharing their loyalty to the family circle with organizations and societies necessary for the upholding of their human or professional rights. We live in a plural society. Life outside the home assumes a multiplicity of aspects all of which can enrich family life but very often, due to a lack of awareness of their full effect on personal life, serve to break up into various facets the impact of evil.

The situation in which many today live their lives is a highly involved and confusing one. We have as yet failed to gauge the precise effects of modern industrialized, urbanized life on personal and social life. Part of the mission of the Church is to bring to the surface and to define the present questioning of modern man about his civilization. Part of the Christian reply to the modern dilemma is to help people to perceive the question or to ask the right questions. There are as many solutions proffered as there are ideologies and very often the Christian solution suggested is merely on the surface and ineffective because it has failed to dig deep enough for the root problems.

Only the layman who is present in the world as its citizen and involved in its construction can throw sufficient light on the subject. With the sense of human solidarity which is innate in his spirituality he is able to recognize at depth the pressures causing spiritual and social disintegration. At a moment when the Church enters her third great missionary era and strives to bring temporal realities into her life and the light of the Gospel to the structures of modern society, the layman is irreplaceable as her eyes and her ears.

In our century the mystery of brotherly love in the community of the Church is acquiring the same community spirit of the first centuries. This spirit is being vocalized in the liturgy and a community of action is flowing from a community of prayer.

After the Bible, wrote Cardinal Mercier, the most important subject for the priest is society. His words have an added urgency today. Contemporary society appears to be developing to its full term as a kind of universal humanism without the inspiration and guidance of the Church. The layman in the Church has become her indispensable missionary, establishing continuous contact between her and the world. As yet there are too few laymen who are being brought to their full development as adult members of the Church. Without them she cannot carry out her mission of unification in a world growing to adulthood. The main task of the clergy today, as Pius XII never failed to repeat, is the spiritual formation of the laity. They are in the front ranks of the Church and without them she can neither establish contact with contemporary society nor collaborate with the new science of work and the new science of art which are its basic elements. But they need the spirituality measuring up to their double vocation as organic members of the Church and citizens of the world. It is a spirituality which does not take them out of the world but one which enables them to interpret it, a "worldly" spirituality, a sacramental one, one bringing with it a sense of the Church and a deep sense of human solidarity.

J. FOSTER

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION OF ADULTS

The Code of Canon Law obliges parish priests to give catechetical instruction to adults on Sundays and Holy Days, in addition to the homily which they are to preach at the principal Mass. The catechetical obligation seems to be disregarded in many places. Can it be said to be fulfilled by a parish priest who, besides preaching the sermon at the principal Mass, preaches at other Masses also? (Parochus.)

REPLY

Canon 1329: "Proprium ac gravissimum officium, pastorum praesertim animarum, est catechetica populi christiani institutionem curare."

Canon 1332: "Diebus dominicis aliisque festis de pracepto, ea hora quae suo iudicio magis apta sit ad populi frequentiam, debet insuper parochus catechismum fidelibus adultis, sermone ad eorum captum accomodato, explicare."

Canon 1344, §1: "Diebus dominicis ceterisque per annum festis de pracepto proprium cuiusque parochi officium est, consueta homilia, praesertim intra Missam in qua maior soleat esse populi frequentia, verbum Dei populo nuntiare."

§2: "Parochus huic obligationi nequit per alium habitualiter satisfacere, nisi ob iustum causam ab Ordinario probatam."

§3: "Potest Ordinarius permittere ut sollemnioribus quibusdam festis aut etiam, ex iusta causa, aliquibus diebus dominicis, concio omittatur."

Since the Reformation, we have been constantly reminded that the Catholic priesthood is primarily a ministry of the sacrifice and sacraments of Christ, so much so, indeed, that the ministry of the word tends occasionally to be regarded as a merely accessory function, on a par with other duties accidentally entailed by the priestly life. Yet there is no pastoral function on which the law of the Church speaks with greater gravity than it does in regard to the divine commission to teach, solemnly given by Christ to His Apostles and their episcopal successors and through them to the parochial clergy. It imposes two distinct obligations, and the Congregation of the Council, which is responsible for its enforcement, has made it clear that they must be distinctly fulfilled. In a letter to the Ordinaries of Italy, 31 May 1920, it asked "what, if any, steps have been taken towards the fulfilment of the above-mentioned dispositions of law governing the explanation of the Gospel and instruction in Christian doctrine", and "whether all the pastors of the diocese, and all others having care of souls: (a) explain the Gospel to the people every Sunday and Holy Day of obligation; (b) explain Christian doctrine to adults on those same days;

and whether, and for what reason, the custom has been introduced of having certain vacations from these exercises".¹ Moreover, the law imposes both obligations directly on the parish priest, though it is only in regard to the homily that it expressly forbids him habitually to delegate his preaching function, except for a just cause approved by the Ordinary.

Of these two functions of the ministry of the word, it is, in the experience of "Parochus", the catechetic rather than the homily that tends to be disregarded. It seems doubtful whether that will be the general experience in Great Britain nowadays. If modern synodal statutes are any guide to actual practice (we are not so starry-eyed as to imagine that they are a fully reliable guide), priority is nowadays given to the catechetic. Many dioceses require it to be given according to a prescribed scheme at all the earlier Masses, and Liverpool goes to the extent of transferring the homily to the evening service (a sparsely attended function nowadays, except when there is evening Mass), in order that the catechetic may be repeated "forma ampliori" at the principal Mass.² One would imagine therefore that, if either duty is neglected, it is more apt to be the homily than the catechetic that goes by the board.

But whatever the fact, there is no ground in law for omitting either, or for making the one do duty for the other. Each serves an essential purpose. The primary object of the homily is to expound those passages of Holy Scripture which the Church has appointed to be read during the Mass, especially the Gospel extract, and in doing so it fulfils a venerable liturgical function, hallowed by Christian custom from the earliest times. But it also has a valuable practical object. In the Christian life, as our Hierarchy has reminded us, formation is not less essential than information,³ and it is the purpose of the homily to form the faithful in the likeness of Christ by expounding His life and example in such manner as to move their hearts to imitation of Him. One does not become a Christian by knowledge and understanding of Christian doctrine, however accurate the knowledge or deep the understanding, but by being re-born in

¹ Bouscaren, *Canon Law Digest*, I, p. 631.

² 1955 Synod, n. 210.

³ Joint Pastoral (1944) on *The Catholic Attitude to Sex Education*, C.T.S., p. 6.

Christ and "doing the truth in charity", so that "we in all things grow up in Him who is the Head, even Christ".¹ Catechetical instruction can conduce to this, notwithstanding the little space our present catechism devotes to the life and example of Christ, but unless the letter of instruction is quickened by the spirit which it is the object of the homily to infuse, it may well remain a dead letter.

The burden of our correspondent's question, however, is whether a parish priest who substitutes sermons for catechetical instructions fulfils his duty. The answer depends partly on whether the statutes of his diocese require catechetical instruction to be given at certain times and according to a provided scheme. If they do, he must observe them. If not, one must enquire further as to the content of his preaching. The distinguishing characteristic of a sermon is its form rather than its matter. Even the prescribed homily can be "per modum facilis commentarii ad sanctum Evangelium, vel per modum instructionis et exhortationis super uno vel alio capite doctrinae et moralis christiana".² Provided, therefore, that his preaching is not mere exhortation, devoid of substance, but supplies solid instruction on the principal points of Christian doctrine and practice, he will fulfil his grave obligation under the common law.

OBLIGATION OF THE "GRATIARUM ACTIO POST MISSAM"

Is the *Gratiarum actio post Missam*, consisting of the antiphon and canticle of the Three Youths, Psalm 150, the responses and three succeeding prayers, prescribed for all who say Mass, or merely recommended? Is the prayer of Pope Clement XI, recently ordered to be added to the *Gratiarum actio*, now a matter of obligation? (D. W.)

REPLY

Canon 810: "Sacerdos ne omittat ad Eucharistici Sacrificii

¹ Ephesians iv, 15.

² Fanfani, *De Iure Parochorum*, n. 211.

oblationem sese piis precibus disponere, eoque expleto, gratias Deo pro tanto beneficio agere."

Rit. Celebr. Miss. XII, 6: "...redit ad Sacristiam, interim dicens Antiphonam *Trium Puerorum* et *Canticum Benedictice*. Si vero sit dimissurus paramenta apud Altare ubi celebravit, finito Evangelio praedicto, ibidem illis se exuit, et dicit Antiphonam *Trium Puerorum* cum *Cantico* et aliis *Orationibus*, ut suo loco ponuntur."

It is certain that there is an obligation, deriving from the natural debt of gratitude of which we are reminded in canon 810, to make a thanksgiving of some kind, and the Missal rubric clearly indicates the form which, according to the mind of the Church, this thanksgiving should normally take. The question is whether the rubric is preceptive or merely directive, and the answer is obscured by the perennial dispute between moralists and rubricists about Missal rubrics of this kind. Rubricists tend, in general, to regard all Missal rubrics as preceptive, except where the contrary is made clear, as it is in regard to the second series of thanksgiving prayers which are described as "Pro opportunitate sacerdotis dicendae". Moralists are more divided. St Alphonsus summarizes four different opinions and himself prefers that which draws a distinction between the rubrics to be observed in the act of celebrating Mass and those outside of Mass. "Dicimus igitur rubricas intra Missam tantum esse preceptivas et has tantum obligare, et quidem sub gravi, nisi levitas materiae excuset".¹ Genicot claims that this opinion has wide support among modern authors and differs verbally rather than really from that of many older authors, and concludes that the other rubrics do not bind in conscience, except in so far as they declare obligations already binding on other grounds.²

For this and other reasons, Canon Mahoney replied to the present question "that the obligation of reciting these prayers is not established with certainty, and that they may be omitted without sin, even venial sin".³ One of his arguments, based on the title affixed to these prayers in earlier editions of *Preces et Pia*

¹ *Theologia Moralis*, Lib. VI, n. 399.

² Genicot-Gortebecque, *Inst. Theol. Mor.*, II, n. 154.

³ THE CLERGY REVIEW, August 1947, pp. 128-30.

*Opera, now Enchiridion Indulgentiarum, has lost its force. Up to the 1950 edition, the two groups of thanksgiving prayers were introduced without distinction as "Preces in Missali Romano pietati sacerdotum propositae ut dicenda, pro eorum opportunitate, post Missae celebrationem". In the 1952 edition of the *Enchiridion*, n. 750, the heading was corrected to "Preces in Missali Romano sacerdotibus propositae post Missae celebrationem vel iuxta rubricas recitandae vel pro eorum opportunitate dicenda". The correction was required in order to bring the heading into line with that of the Missal, but though it confirms the distinction between the first groups of prayers, which are "to be said according to the rubrics", and those which are merely added for the convenience of priests, it does not settle the question as to whether the rubric is preceptive or merely directive. Nor does it affect the argument from canon 932, that it is not the normal practice of the Church to indulgence works of precept, and therefore that the indulgence attached to these prayers is an indication that they are not strictly of precept. We do not claim that this conclusion is the more probable opinion, but consider that it has at least solid probability.*

The answer to the second question is not in doubt. The Sacred Congregation of Rites, by decree of 9 March 1960, ordered that the "Oratio universalis sub nomine Clementis Papae XI vulgata" be inserted among the prayers "pro opportunitate Sacerdotis dicendae" in new editions of the Roman Missal, after the prayer "En Ego".¹ It is therefore certainly optional.

L. L. McR.

POSITION OF A BAPTISTRY

In the planning of a church what is the correct position for the baptistry? (Architect.)

REPLY

For many centuries the great churches of the West had a separate building for a baptistry (e.g. the baptistry of Rome's

¹ A.A.S., 1960, LII, pp. 358-9; THE CLERGY REVIEW, July 1960, p. 430.
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cathedral, St John Lateran; the great baptistries of Florence, Parma, Pisa). Since about the fifteenth century, however, the separate building has gone out of use, and the baptistry now is a special chapel within the church itself (e.g. the baptistry of St Peter's, Rome; of Westminster Cathedral), or, in a small church, a corner of the building railed off.

No rubric fixes the correct position of the baptistry. This must be determined by authentic tradition and by the requirements of the rite of baptism. By tradition the correct position for the baptistry is near the main door of the church, to the left, preferably, i.e. in the north-west corner (liturgically a church is presumed to be orientated, with the sanctuary at the east end, and the main door at the west end). There are two reasons for this; the first a practical reason, the baptistry should be near the porch—the main one, or at least a subsidiary one—where the ceremonies of baptism are begun; the second, for symbolical reasons, traditionally the west is regarded as the direction of the land of darkness and unbelief, the east—the quarter of the rising sun—as the point of light and faith. Much more important, however, for the architect, and a matter on which the majority of architects go wrong in their church planning, is the relative position of the porch, church and baptistry. When the ceremonies of baptism are correctly performed they are done in three different places: the first part is carried out *ad limen ecclesiae*;¹ the second part within the church, but outside the baptistry;² the last part of the rite is carried out at the font within the baptistry. Accordingly, the church must be so planned that the priest and all others taking part in the ceremony may be able to enter the church from the porch and proceed *through the church* to the baptistry. Quite often the church is so constructed that the priest must needs go into the baptistry without passing through the church. By a false *a priori* argument the architect argues that as the catechumen is not yet baptized he should not enter the church but go from the porch into the baptistry and thence enter the church after he has been baptized. He does not understand that the second part of the rite takes the little procession into the church (*Ingredere*

¹ *Rituale Romanum*, II, i, 68.

² *Ibid.*, I, ii, 10, 12.

in *ecclesiam Dei*, says the priest¹) and there the priest is directed to stand with his back to the baptistry² while he carries out the final exorcism, the *Ephpheta* ceremony, the renunciation of Satan and the first anointing. These ceremonies are derived from the old rites of the catechumenate and used to be performed *in the church* to which the catechumens were admitted for the pre-Mass.

Accordingly, in a correctly planned church it must be possible to pass from the porch to the baptistry *via the church*, where part of the ceremonial is carried out.

J. B. O'C.

BOOK REVIEWS

One Fold. Edited by Edward F. Hanahoe, s.a., and Titus F. Cranny. (Chair of Unity Apostolate, Graymoor, Garrison, New York, 1959. \$6.50.)

Catholicisme Romain et Protestantisme. By E. Chavaz. (Casterman, Tourneau, 1958. 69 fr. (Belgian).)

THERE are two possible Catholic approaches to the ecumenical question. The traditional one adopts as its terms of reference the doctrine that there is one only visible Church, and that this one Church is identical with that of Rome. Ecumenism in this sense is the attempt to win over non-Catholics to an acceptance of the Petrine authority of the Holy See. This approach advocates prayer for conversions, appeals to non-Catholics to consider sympathetically our claims, and the sympathetic recognition of certain elements of true doctrine, worship or sacraments still surviving in separated Christian communions. The second approach aims at dialogue and united prayer for unity among people as yet still divided concerning the nature of the Church. Its term of reference is also the doctrine that there is only one visible Church intended by Christ, but it prescinds for the sake of mutual prayer and dialogue from any final definition as to the nature of that visible unity. Those adopting this second approach do not appeal to Protestants to consider immediately the possibility of submission to the Pope; but they are satisfied

¹ *R.R.*, II, ii, 10.

² *Ibid.*, n. 12.

with appealing to them to pray, at the same time that we pray, that God will give us all the kind of unity He desires.

From the traditional Catholic viewpoint the first approach is above suspicion, and has been the normal approach adopted by popes and councils. There is no risk, it is thought, with this approach that Catholics will be misled into any wrong views as to the divine authority of church and papacy, as we understand them. The second approach is seen, however, to have certain advantages in winning the goodwill of Protestants, and in encouraging both mutual prayer and dialogue. On the other hand some people fear the dangers of indifferentism.

On the whole it would be true to say that, partly owing to circumstances of history, English and American Catholics have favoured the first approach. Besides being less compromising, it often seems to us a more honest approach. We believe the Roman Catholic Church is the only true Church, we believe it to be God's will that the Pope should have supreme authority, and at least we are honest in telling non-Catholics that we are hoping and praying that they will come to the same point of view.

It would probably be equally true to say that the second approach has been more normal in France and Belgium, and perhaps on the continent generally. Catholics in those countries realize more vividly than many English-speaking Catholics do that Protestants are highly sensitive on the question of "submission" to papal authority. While we must be honest, and admit to Protestants that it is for us a matter of faith that the Pope has divine authority, yet we need not insist that they accept this as a condition of prayer for unity. Far better, they think, to hold common dialogue between competent theologians in order to discover how much we hold in common, so that the inevitable barriers which remain will be seen as perhaps less insuperable. Thus, if it is really true, as so many Catholic and Protestant theologians have in late years come to recognize, that good "orthodox" theologians on either side of the barrier hold a doctrine of grace which is either identical or very similar, then one supposed obstacle to reunion is purely or mainly an imaginary one; and the sooner this is realized, the better.

In the two books here being reviewed, we have these two approaches exemplified. Frs Hanahoe and Cranny's book gives us the history of the Chair of Unity Octave as it was originally started and developed under the inspiration of Fr Paul Francis, the Anglican and later convert, founder of the Society of the Atonement. This is the movement which has been so frequently supported by successive popes during the present century. The book gives us all the official

documents relating to this conversion movement. It also contains a series of chapters by different priest-authors, dealing with many aspects of the ecumenical convert movement. Fr Hanahoe contributes one of the longest chapters on the important subject of *Vestigia Ecclesiae*, showing how far a Catholic can and should go in admitting the existence of such *vestigia* surviving in the various dissident Christian communions. One of the writers, Fr Curran, s.j., recognizes the existence of an immediate aim of Catholic ecumenism short of actual conversion. This aim is "to strengthen the Catholic patrimony still retained to some extent by dissident Christians and to eliminate human falsifications intermingled with the remnants of their Catholic faith". Fr Curran's essay is the only one which approaches the matter rather more from the more usual continental angle, and urges the value of dialogue between Catholic and Protestant.

Fr Chavaz's book adopts the same tactics as Fr Bouyer and Fr Urs von Balthasar, among others, of attempting to help the dialogue between Catholicism and Protestantism by removing Protestant misunderstandings especially in the matter of the theology of grace. The present work was occasioned by a book of M. Franz-J. Leenhardt, dean of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Geneva. M. Leenhardt's book had the title, *Catholicisme tel que Genève le voit*. The object of the book was to point out that, with all its attempts to prove itself orthodox and anti-pelagian, Roman Catholic theology of grace was nevertheless radically unacceptable to the Reformed Protestant. M. Leenhardt thought he found many subtle forms of Pelagianism in Catholic theology, even while recognizing the genuine desire of Roman Catholics to insist upon the importance and gratuitous nature of grace. Fr Chavaz certainly appears to the reviewer to have succeeded in his task of showing how the supposed Pelagian aspects of Catholic doctrine are only in the mind of one who misunderstands that doctrine. He also shows how the peculiar Catholic emphasis on certain aspects of human co-operation or intrinsic grace is as fully based on the Scripture sources as the Protestant emphasis on our utter need of grace and its full gratuitousness.

One chapter of the volume deals with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the Church, and shows here also the fundamentally unscriptural nature of an extreme Protestant denial of such influence as it is understood by Catholics.

In England, it is certain that many Protestants will be entirely with Fr Chavaz in their acceptance of the Catholic emphasis as being as fully evangelical as that found traditionally among Calvinists and Lutherans.

Both books will be valued by all of us who acknowledge the duty of bringing back separated Christians to the unity that Christ desired. It is unfortunate that the American book is so expensive; 46s. is certainly a high price to pay. Perhaps it will be published over here in a cheaper edition.

Richard, L. Le Mystère de la Rédemption. In-8, 299 pp. (Tournai, Desclée, 1959.)

We have long needed a new Catholic treatment of the Redemption. Not only has the Redemption tended to be neglected by Catholic theologians in favour of that other aspect of the Faith so closely related to it, the Incarnation, but it was not until recently seen in a sufficiently wide context. Whereas at one time there was a tendency to reduce the mystery of the Redemption to the notion of adequate satisfaction, the tendency today is to see it as coterminous with the whole work of Christ. Yet, in spite of this new appreciation of the richness of this concept, there is still room for a specialized treatment of all Christ's work under this aspect.

Professor Richard's book is perhaps the first full Catholic treatment of the subject since the long series of valuable monographs published earlier in the century by Rivièrè. Valuable as the latter works were, they now appear to us as inadequate. Rivièrè remained to the end convinced that St Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* represented the most developed form of the pure Scriptural and Patristic doctrine. He knew of course that there were other aspects of the Patristic doctrine, but he looked upon them as either variants of the satisfaction concept or as secondary side-issues. On one matter Rivièrè remained almost completely silent. This was the Scriptural and Patristic importance of Christ's Resurrection in the scheme of Redemption. Rivièrè's view was for long accepted as reflecting the traditional Catholic teaching. There was a simplicity about the notion that Christ saved us by making an act of satisfaction which only He, as God made man, could make. It was a view characteristic of the age of ready apologetic defence of the faith. Man had committed an infinite offence, and could not be saved until he made an infinite act of satisfaction. Only Christ on man's behalf could make such an act. Hence the Incarnation was necessary. It is true that Rivièrè softened the uninspiring logic and legalism of this view by insisting that satisfaction, to be pleasing to God, must be an act of love. Christ's passion and death were acts of supreme love; and it was this love rather than any measurable quantity of suffering which gave satisfaction for our want of love and disobedience.

Professor Richard corrects these inadequate views. He shows

clearly in his analysis that the data of Scripture and Patristic are far too rich and complex to be reducible to any simple formula. He makes clear that we should not try to explain redemption on the analogy of Old Testament sacrifices. Such rites had little more than a paedagogic and typical value. In the Old Testament it is in Messianism that the author finds the Redemption chiefly foreshadowed and expressed. As far as the New Testament is concerned, Professor Richard insists, of course, that both St Paul and St John give as much prominence to the resurrection as to the passion and death.

In his valuable treatment of Patristic teaching, it would have been better if Professor Richard had not occasionally chosen to describe the Greek view under the formula "deification by incarnation". Many critics, including some excellent Catholics, have wrongly thought that some of these Fathers held a view that we can come to share Christ's divine nature by the mere fact of His assuming ours. Professor Richard fully admits that the Greek Fathers cannot rightly be accused of transferring into Christianity a kind of neoplatonic view of redemption by absorption into the divinity. He also admits that, even for Fathers like St Athanasius and St Cyril of Alexandria, there is no notion that we can be saved without Christ's death. Yet he does frequently speak as though there existed among the Fathers a view that the mere fact of the incarnation ensures our share in Christ's divinity. It is of course undeniable that the Fathers often say in a poetic antithesis: The Son of God became man that the men might become gods. But in the context it is always clear that they believe as firmly as did St Athanasius that without the death of Christ there can be no remission of sin.

Professor Richard carries his synthesis forward to the modern period, giving the views of the Reformers and the Council of Trent, and showing that popular spirituality does not always harmonize with doctrine in this matter. In his doctrinal synthesis at the end of the book, he sees the Redemption above all as a struggle between divine love and man's sin. He finally shows how the notion must be extended to include the application of the fruits of Christ's Atonement in the life and work of the Church.

This work is a valuable addition to our libraries, and I for one will recommend it highly to my students.

H. F. D.

Growth in Holiness. By Fr Faber. Pp. xix + 372. (Burns Oates. 18s.)

APART from his hymns Faber has not, it seems, left an abiding impress on English Catholicism. The reasons are not far to seek. He

is not in our central tradition; he is too exuberant, sugary, Italianate. But, as Ronald Chapman says in his discerning preface to this re-edition of *Growth in Holiness* "amid much that can be discarded there are treasures of pure gold".

Growth in Holiness is regarded by many as Faber's best work. His faults are least in evidence; his doctrine is sure, solid and traditional; and his shrewd, psychological insight used to advantage. He writes for souls in the world, with a main eye to the "Belgravians". His general theme is the second of the three stages of the spiritual life, called in the textbooks the illuminative way but not inaptly described by him as the long-drawn great central wilderness. Signs of progress, the ruling passion, the human spirit, prayer, temptations, spiritual direction, sin and the right use of faults—these are some of the matters he deals with; briefly he covers the usual ground of books of this type. His aim is to stimulate the love of God, to teach middle-class Christians how in a practical humdrum way to answer love by love.

It is, then, right that at least this work of Faber's should be rescued from oblivion. The book will be among the valuable products of the excellent and growing Orchard Series.

The First Spiritual Writers. By F. Cayré, A.A.

Post-Reformation Spirituality. By Louis Cognet.

(Faith and Fact Books. Burns Oates. 7s. 6d. each.)

PÈRE CAYRÉ describes his book as a short collection of general studies on the thought of the Fathers. It is, in fact, for all its necessary brevity, a distinguished contribution to what has been called in France "ressourcement patristique". In their spiritual teaching the Fathers were firmly based on the Gospels, particularly St John, and on St Paul. It was the fundamental truths of the Faith with which they were concerned—the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Church and Mary as its type; holiness meant the divine life in the soul, the union with the Trinity through the Mystical Body of Christ. This union was achieved by the individual through contemplative prayer, which is true wisdom. As means to free the soul for union the Fathers stressed virginity, detachment and the cenobitic life. Because of its basic quality this patristic spirituality has a perennial value. Such in brief outline are the themes which the author draws out with accomplished skill.

The short prefatory note credits Père Cayré with a Manual of Pathology! And there are one or two slips in the text. Thus, on p. 34, St Athanasius is said by (the translator?) to have been bemused

with philosophy; and on p. 77 the Trinity is described as "One and yet Three in one Person". Finally, is it quite true to say (p. 38) that the Christological formula, "One Person in two Natures", was resisted less from love of orthodoxy than for political motives?

The second book is an excellent summary of the history and development of spiritual ideas from the Renaissance to the French School. In the Renaissance-Reformation period the highlights are the *Imitation*, St Ignatius and Erasmus; that is, *devotio moderna*, methodical prayer, and the religion of humanism. Running through the period is the declining influence of mediaeval mysticism. The sixteenth was above all the Spanish century, notable for the intense revival of mysticism, associated chiefly with the names of St Teresa and St John of the Cross. St Teresa wrote from her own experiences; the author calls her approach psychological empiricism. St John was less dependent on his experiences; he set them in the traditional framework. The author stresses the Saint's anti-intellectualism; by it he joined hands with the great tradition of mysticism. With the seventeenth century France took the lead. The great names are St Francis de Sales and Bérulle. St Francis is affective and psychological; in his mystical teaching he does not analyse the more extreme features, passivity and theopathy. Bérulle centred his piety on the Incarnation; he is theological and abstract.

The great mystical revival degenerated into quietism and illuminism. The author outlines this decline and its consequences in his closing pages, with a comparatively full account of the controversy between Bossuet and Fénelon. A host of lesser names are shown as adding their distinctive influence to the spiritual trends in all the centuries under discussion. Naturally it was only in the areas where Catholicism survived that spiritual thought could be rich and creative.

The translations are good, especially of the second book. Both are noteworthy additions to the valuable Faith and Fact books.

The Light and the Rainbow. By Hilda Graef. Pp. ix + 414. (Longmans. 35s.)

MISS GRAEF has set herself an ambitious task, no less than to show that "there is a continuity ranging from the doctrine of Genesis about the essence and end of man to the teaching of Teresa of Lisieux on how man is to reach this goal in our own twentieth century". Naturally in a book of limited compass she has to be severely selective of both authors and trends of thought. The Light of the title is God as revealed in Christ; the Rainbow, the refractions of the Light radiated by individual temperaments and schools of

thought throughout the ages. Her recurrent themes are God's transcendence and immanence, man as God's image, and the interrelation between morality and spirituality.

Miss Graef divides her book into three parts. In the first, "Between Dusk and Dawn", she traces from Genesis to the Canticle God's spiritual preparation of His people for the coming of Christ. In the second, "The Light Shines", she studies the Person of Christ, His moral teaching, stern in its exclusive demands, yet full of tender love, and His revelation of the Trinity as the goal and, through the Holy Spirit, the agent of man's contemplative union; but a goal to be reached, as all subsequent ages will realize, not independently of Christ but always by way of Him, *per Christum hominem ad Christum Deum*. From Christ she passes to His "mystic" apostles, St John and St Paul. What He taught they interpreted and amplified, and thus completed the foundations on which the Rainbow ages would build.

St Paul [writes Miss Graef] spreads out before his readers the whole spiritual life of the Christian from his first incorporation in Christ by baptism to his ultimate share in the life of the perfect Body in the world to come. His doctrine is perfect in its balance: body and soul, sacraments and ecstatic experiences, individual fervour and common worship, mystic union on earth and universal beatitude in heaven, summed up in Christ, the God-man, and His Body which is the Church.

In the third part, "The Rainbow", the author shows how this revealed doctrine has been variously expounded and expanded by certain prominent Christian writers in antiquity, the Middle Ages and modern times. From among the Fathers she chooses Origen, St Gregory of Nyssa and Denis the Areopagite in the East, and St Augustine in the West. Of these Origen, to some extent, and St Augustine explain contemplation as an illumination; for them God is light. The other two, and particularly Denis, see it as darkness, the brilliance of God blinding the eye of the soul, as it were. Hence there came about a twofold trend in mystical doctrine, a *via positiva* and a *via negativa*. While Christ is for all these authors the way to union, they tend to lay more emphasis on His divinity than on His humanity.

In the Middle Ages, despite the abiding influence of St Augustine, it was the *via negativa* of Denis that prevailed. What was characteristic of the Middle Ages, and has been characteristic of Western piety ever since, was a tender devotion to Christ's humanity, especially in His Passion. St Bernard and St Bonaventure were its leading exponents, and it coloured to some extent their teaching on

contemplation. But they were careful to guard against an undue emotionalism, St Bernard by emphasizing the union of man's will with God's in charity as an essential prerequisite to contemplation, and St Bonaventure by infusing an intellectual undertone into his seraphic ardour, and maintaining a constant awareness of the majesty of God. From this more human approach to Christ two results flowed: a pronounced development of mysticism and ecstatic prayer among women (Miss Graef discusses St Catherine of Siena and Julian of Norwich) and a cult of excessive bodily mortification as a loving sharing in Christ's sufferings. This last was encouraged by the new orders of friars, particularly the Franciscans. It was given a philosophic justification by the prevalent Platonic teaching on the relation between the soul and the body. But there was a reaction which Miss Graef does not mention. The Aristotelianism of St Thomas gave the body its due essential share in the composition of the whole man; while its inordinate tendencies, due to the Fall, must be curbed, it merited considerateness and proper care as the partner of the soul in the life of grace here and of glory hereafter.

Despite this new devotion to Christ's humanity, an older tradition of what Miss Graef calls metaphysical mysticism survived. Its most distinguished exponent was Eckhart, who combined "the sanest and most unimpeachable spiritual teaching . . . with the most paradoxical and indeed absurd and heretical-sounding statements". In England the entirely orthodox *Cloud of Unknowing* belongs to this metaphysical tradition.

In the modern age, dating from the Reformation, Miss Graef selects for treatment the Carmelites, the Jesuits and St Teresa of Lisieux. St Bonaventure had initiated a psychological approach to mysticism. The great Carmelites, St Teresa and St John of the Cross, perfect this approach. St Teresa "investigated the mystical life in a truly scientific spirit". "She combined an exceptional feminine intuition with sound commonsense, while her education had been sufficient to assist her powers of observation and expression, but left her unencumbered by theories and philosophical and theological systems." St John, in whom theology, poetry and the highest mystical experience blended, situated that experience within the framework of theology and applied to its exposition the criteria of Scripture and reason.

St Ignatius in his *Exercises* brought methodical prayer to perfection. The dwellers in the plain who cannot scale the heights of Mount Carmel must find God in their daily pursuits. It is for the priests who have to care for such souls that St Ignatius wrote. He developed a technique of prayer, and thus, says Miss Graef, with

perhaps a little over-indulgence in categorizing, adapted spirituality to our technical and scientific age. With him science and art of spiritual direction, known from the time of the Eastern monks, attained a high degree of study and skill. Of St Ignatius's followers Miss Graef treats of only two, St Alphonsus Rodriguez and Caus-sade; she regrets that she could not include Lallemant. They were Jesuit mystics. She firmly contends that they were not thereby out of harmony with normal Jesuit spirituality. The practice of the *Exercises* will lead gradually to a more simplified form of prayer and so pave the way for contemplation. Moreover, in the complete dedication to Christ which the *Exercises* promote there will develop a union with God which must be to some degree contemplative.

Miss Graef ends with a study of St Teresa of Lisieux, the Saint of the Common Man, given providentially to our age of the Common Man. Her teaching is the simple Gospel teaching. Her dominant characteristic is ordinariness.

By examining her own trivial actions and their motives under the microscope she made clear to everyone what De Caussade had taught his Visitation nuns, that the material of sanctity lies all around us, within our reach, that we need but to take hold of it and utilize it in order to become saints ourselves.

As we said, Miss Graef has had to be selective of the writers she uses. One may not dispute her personal choice. But it would seem that to have included two or three of the authors she regretfully rejects in her preface would not have disturbed the equilibrium at which she aimed. Her book would have been enriched had she included some notice of St Basil, St Gregory the Great and, perhaps most of all, St Francis de Sales, the exponent of devout humanism, of inward mortification, and of sanctity in the world. But this small criticism is not meant to detract from the great value of her series of studies; they show a fine understanding of her subject, and are remarkable for their range and penetration and for their masterful presentation.

The Imitation of Christ. Translated by Ronald Knox and Michael Oakley. (Burns Oates. 3s. 6d.)

THE *Imitation* was Mgr Knox's favourite spiritual reading. He left this translation incomplete and it was continued, at his suggestion, by Mr Michael Oakley in the same style, easy, direct and colloquial. Its publication as a paper-back Universe Book, handy to use and cheap, puts it at everyone's disposal.

J. C.

Rhythmic Proportions in Early Medieval Ecclesiastical Chant. By Dr J. W. A. Vollaerts, s.j. Second edition. (E. J. Brill, Leiden, Holland. 25 guilders.)

THE first edition of this remarkable book came into my hands soon after its publication early in March 1958. A careful perusal immediately convinced me of its outstanding merits. Now, after more than two years of prolonged study, both of the book itself and of the manuscripts to which it refers, I can only say that I regard it as far and away the most important of all modern treatises on the vexed question of Gregorian Chant interpretation. That I am not alone in this estimate seems to be borne out by the fact that it has been found necessary to publish a second edition less than two years after the first. To me this is not surprising. But what is surprising is that, after all this time, the book should continue to be completely ignored by the Solesmes authorities. There has been no mention of it in either *La Revue Grégorienne* or *Études Grégoriennes*. Such silence is both impressive and significant. The only possible explanation is that their own divergences of view (about which there is no longer any secret) make it impossible for any of these authorities to give an "official" verdict on the book. All that their fellow-travellers can say in these circumstances is that the book "is being carefully studied at Solesmes at the present time". (This was in February 1959, twelve months after the book had been published, and well over a year ago!) More recently another Mocquereau disciple claimed that the book had already been "put out of court" by an unpublished document which he had not even seen! So much for the ethics of propaganda.

If we may judge by a recent article in *La Revue Grégorienne*, the time is not far distant when, even at Solesmes itself, the entire edifice erected by Dom Mocquereau will begin to totter. This will cause no surprise to those who are concerned solely with discovering the true solution to the Gregorian problem, although it will undoubtedly disconcert those whose main preoccupation is to maintain the Mocquereau theory at all costs—even to the extent of ignoring anyone who presumes to criticize it or to expose its falsity by scientific argument. Discussion is impossible with those whose blind loyalty to a system renders them impervious to logic—more particularly when they assert that the high spiritual value of their own interpretation, being based on prayer, necessarily renders it superior to one based on a scientific examination of the data they ignore!

The genuine scholar, of course, will always be ready to abandon an interpretation when he sees it to be erroneous. Therefore, as a follower of Fr Vollaerts, I shall be quite prepared to abandon the Vollaerts interpretation if and when logical arguments based on

factual evidence are adduced to disprove it. Until such arguments appear, however, I shall continue to accept his solution as the most convincing of all that have yet been offered. It convinces me because it is clearly based on, and corroborated by, a careful study of the best Chant manuscripts and their variant readings, and is in full accord with the evidence of those monastic writers on the Chant who flourished at the very period when these manuscripts were being written. Admittedly not every detail is settled by Fr Vollaerts, and, were he still living, he would be the first to acknowledge that many points require further investigation. I must confess, however, that I find it difficult to believe that his main thesis could ever be disproved except by rejecting the evidence on which it is based. But to reject the evidence of the Chant manuscripts and the ancient writers would be to abandon all hope of ever finding the true solution. We should then be in the position of Fr Jos. Smits van Waesberghe, s.j., who declares that "it is impossible for us now, alas, to discover exactly how the Gregorian Chant was originally performed" (*Gregorian Chant*, p. 51). Anyone who lacks the courage to face the evidence or to accept the conclusions to which it leads deserves to be defeated. But no one can justify an interpretation which flatly contradicts the evidence.

In order to reach as wide a public as possible, Fr Vollaerts, a native of Holland, was brave enough to write his book in English. His language is not always idiomatic, and, although a good many obscurities have been removed in the new edition, there are still a fair number of linguistic blemishes. The sincere seeker after truth will not allow such minor matters to deter him from studying a book from which, in my opinion, he will learn more about the Chant and its authentic interpretation than from any other modern publication.

Panis Vitae. By J. H. Reginald Dixon. (Hinrichsen. 12s. 6d.)

THIS is the vocal score of an oratorio which has been specially composed for the 1960 Eucharistic Congress to be held at Munich. The libretto (in Latin) is in praise of the Blessed Sacrament. It consists of passages from Scripture and from the Office of Corpus Christi, including the full texts of *Verbum supernum*, *Pange lingua* and *Lauda Sion*. The published score is a facsimile of the composer's manuscript, in which the syllables are not always clearly set under their proper notes. On the title page, however, we are informed that an engraved edition is being prepared.

Of the music it is unfortunately difficult to write with much enthusiasm. It has all too obviously been composed with the limita-

tions of a not too musical audience in mind. No one could describe it as being in the contemporary idiom. In fact there is hardly a progression in the work that might not have been written at almost any time during the last 200 years or so. In other words the music lacks character. Incidentally, too, whenever Gregorian melodies are cited there are curious inconsistencies and uncertainties—which is not surprising in view of the present chaos to which the recognized experts have led us. Thus, in the first verse of *Pange lingua* (p. 54) we find ictus marks coinciding with the metre; but when we come to *Tantum ergo* (p. 65) the rhythm has degenerated into something approaching orthodox Mocquereau. Again, although the first verse of *Verbum supernum* (p. 10) is written in equal notes, most of the second verse (in the tenor, at the foot of the same page) is frankly (and convincingly!) mensuralist.

The approximate duration of Dr Dixon's oratorio is said to be well over an hour and a half. Nevertheless, despite its impressive dimensions, it seems only fair to regard the work merely as a *pièce d'occasion*. As such it need not be taken too seriously nor judged too severely. The circumstances of its first performance at Munich will no doubt guarantee the successful launching of a work which would present no difficulty to singers of even average competence. On the other hand I think it unlikely that it will impress continental musicians as an outstanding example of contemporary Catholic church music, and—in spite of what the publishers say—I do not believe that it is "destined to hold an important place in modern liturgical literature". To achieve such a distinction as that, something at once more adventurous and more austere is required than an outmoded nineteenth-century chromaticism.

A. GREGORY MURRAY

The Mass Commentator's Handbook. By Clifford Howell, s.j. (Litur-
gical Press, Collegeville, Minn., U.S.A. \$3.00)

WITH the spread of dialogue Mass such a book as this has become desirable, and Fr Howell is the ideal one to do it, because of practical experience and judgement. His short chapter of advice to the celebrant is very sound and understanding. His brief printed paraphrases for collect-secret-postcommunion are of first quality too, but this paraphrase business is necessarily a lame and chilling affair: one hopes that the authorities will have second thoughts about it. A commentator or "animator" may be needed in a large church, but in a small church a lector or two seems all that is needed. Fr Howell's excellent book will be published in this country in the autumn (Burns Oates).

Panorama of Church History. By Abbé L. Munch and J. Montjuvin. (Editions de l'Ecole, distributed in England by Burns Oates. 7s. 6d.)

IT is all one great story—the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the twenty centuries of the Christian Church: and anything that will make this clear and visual is educationally desirable. A welcome therefore to this album which gathers events, saints, heresies, popes, and secular history into a multi-coloured time-chart, thus continuing a similar *Panorama of Bible History* by the same authors. Its pages and print are on the small size, so it seems to be intended for individual use rather than as a wall-frieze. The possibilities about reunion of Christendom are hopefully indicated especially in Abbé Munch's introduction. The translating has many mistakes, and of course English events are not so prominent as you or I would have shown them, but pending something more effective this visual aid can be confidently recommended.

More Little Ways. By Carolyn Conway. Pp. 112. (Burns Oates. 9s. 6d.)

A BOOK presenting twenty saints, mostly lesser-known ones, with some pleasant drawings by Astrid Walford. Would make an agreeable present for seven-to-ten-year-olds, girls especially, but boys not excluded. An earlier volume of the same was called *The Little Ways*.

Children and Priest at Mass. By Hubert McEvoy, s.j. Pp. 95. (Oliver & Boyd. 5s.)

THIS is another of Fr McEvoy's prayer-and-instruction-with-photographs books. The photographs are good (though the priest never seems to open his lips). So are the brief prayers when they occur, but the text seems lacking in certainty of aim. The idea is to join in the gestures of Mass, but this amounts to little in fact. And if it is a prayer-book, there is too much explanation. However, anything well-written about the Mass is bound to do some good to somebody.

F. H. D.

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